

Climate Science Center Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Terms of Reference

Purpose

Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SAC) assist Climate Science Center (CSC) Directors in the identification of regional natural and cultural resource management priorities and science needs. This guidance helps to shape the development and implementation of CSC strategic science plans and periodic funding actions. SACs are also crucial for providing feedback on the direction and effectiveness of the CSC program.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Provide counsel for the development and periodic updating of the **regional science agenda** (5-year) for the CSC.
2. Provide counsel on the development of CSC **planning and implementation documents**, including periodic short-term science plans and strategic solicitation documents for periodic funding opportunities.
3. Provide and facilitate **feedback** concerning how effectively CSC products meet the needs of stakeholders.

While SAC input is extremely important, final authority for program direction and project selection, funding, and portfolio management rest with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) CSC Director, and will be shaped by multiple factors, including SAC-identified priorities, the creation of a balanced scientific portfolio (both regionally and nationally), the needs of ongoing scientific activities, and funding constraints.

Each CSC should have a functioning stakeholder committee to provide input on the aforementioned areas. In special cases, an already developed regional stakeholder committee (e.g. the Alaska Climate Change Executive Roundtable (ACCER) in Alaska) may serve as the SAC for a region.

Membership and Structure

1. Membership on CSC SACs is guided by the following considerations:
 - a) As a general guideline, SAC membership should not exceed 25 individuals and should include a SAC Chair.
 - b) SAC members *should* include relevant federal, state, local, regional, and tribal natural and cultural resource management entities and science providers.
 - c) SAC members *must* be drawn only from federal, state, local, and tribal governments. Nongovernmental organizations, private individuals, non-tribal indigenous parties, and similar partners *may not* be formal SAC members, although their input is important (see 3 below).

- d) Agencies/bureaus with more than one region intersecting a CSC geographic domain will be asked to coordinate internally and provide consolidated input.
 - e) Each Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) that has substantial area within the CSC region should be represented.
 - f) The USGS CSC Directors and USGS Regional Directors are expected to coordinate membership of boundary-spanning LCCs with relevant LCCs, CSCs, and other partners.
2. Institutions that are members of a CSC host consortium *may not* be formal members of the SAC, but are encouraged to be participants/observers and to provide technical input to the SAC. This restriction does not apply to federal consortium members.
 3. Each CSC SAC will solicit input from non-SAC parties in both public and private sectors and non-tribal indigenous parties, and should do so in a manner and timing that enables consideration of this input in formulating periodic strategic plans and documents.
 4. Nominations of SAC members be guided by the following process:
 - a) Federal agency/bureau and LCC members will be nominated by their respective agency/bureau or LCC.
 - b) State members will be nominated by their respective state government in consultation with relevant regional Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency (AFWA) bodies.
 - c) Tribal members will be selected after solicitation of nominations from regional tribes/nations.
 - d) The CSCs will solicit nominations from tribes, states, federal agencies, and LCCs in advance of the end of a term period.
 - e) Final membership selections rest with the USGS CSC Director and the SAC Chair.
 5. Participation from executive level regional leaders is highly valued on the CSC SACs. If consistent participation is not realistic, delegation to an appropriate alternate is acceptable. Technical staff members are always welcome as participants/observers.
 6. Subcommittees may be established at the discretion of the SAC Chair and USGS CSC Director.
 7. Each SAC should meet at least once per year, preferably face to face. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the USGS CSC Director and SAC Chair.

Tenure

1. Members of a CSC SAC will serve for two year terms¹, with the possibility for renewal.

¹ Initial CSC SAC members were not provided with a specified term, so in Fiscal Year 2014, all SACs will be “rededicated” and SAC members will be given specified terms of either two or three years. Staggering initial membership terms in this manner will ensure continuity of SAC activity during the first nomination cycle in two years.

2. Members are strongly encouraged to attend all meetings or to delegate to an appropriate alternate. Considerations for term renewal will include regular meeting participation and constructive counsel and engagement at SAC meetings.

Leadership and Governance

1. The SAC will normally be chaired by the USGS Regional Director or designee for the relevant CSC. Exceptions include the ACCER in Alaska, which has a rotating membership structure.
2. The Chair of the SAC is expected to chair SAC meetings and ensure effective communication between the CSC and other regional USGS entities. The SAC Chair should also facilitate engagement from regional USGS centers in CSC science projects.
3. Co-chairs may be identified at the joint discretion of the SAC Chair and USGS CSC Director.
4. SAC business will not normally require votes, and it is hoped that SAC members will arrive at a consensus regarding their input to the USGS CSC Director. However, minority views are encouraged in order to reflect the full views of the committee.

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