

Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP)

Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) Action Plan

For the Period November 2012 through June 2014

Prepared by

STAC Executive Board Members:

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Introduction: The APNEP STAC plays a pivotal role in providing APNEP with the scientific and technical support needed to implement the 2012 Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP). The STAC also works to develop research initiatives, and to review science and technical components of policy recommendations. The STAC provides advice and support to APNEP's Staff, Policy Board, and Implementation Committee on scientific and technical issues and acts as a forum for the exchange of scientific information about the APNEP region. Additionally, STAC members work toward promoting a more consistent and cooperative approach to scientific data and design, and implement scientific and technical projects assigned by the Policy Board. The Committee may also recommend possible work tasks to the Policy Board. The duties of the STAC and detailed guidance for how the STAC is to operate in fulfilling its' duties are contained in the bylaws as published in the Committee Bylaws (APNEP 2012, see apnep.org/web/apnep/stac).

In keeping with the requirement that the STAC assist in developing near-term action plans, the Executive Board at their December 3, 2012 meeting determined that a plan covering the forthcoming two-year period would be desirable and appropriate and would be useful in focusing STAC activities for the Committee, STAC Executive Board and APNEP staff. The plan is organized around a prioritization of the STAC activities and areas of assistance as specified in the Bylaws.

Mandated Activities and Proposed Tasks:

- 1) Research and collate best practices around key issues, and maintain the database for practitioners;
 - A. At least four of the STAC meetings during the 2012-2014 session will be theme-based, each organized around a single topic. These meetings will begin with briefings from environmental professionals whose expertise includes all or part of the meeting topic, followed by a STAC workshop segment whereby Committee discussion seeks to determine next steps, often including the creation of an outline, assigning authors, and drafting text.

- B. Meeting topics described in Part A will include those from the following list with the understanding that each topic will incorporate the overarching theme of adaptation to climate change: sea-level rise, water quality/quantity, shoreline development/ stabilization, and evaluating ecological responses. The topics would be at least regionally focused if not specifically focused on the Albemarle-Pamlico watershed.
 - C. The product from each theme-based workshop will be a written report and/or other activity. An example of the former is a new, or updated where appropriate, technical issue paper, authored by a subset of the STAC and posted on the STAC web site.
- 2) Coordinate an Albemarle-Pamlico Ambient Monitoring Network (APAMoN) and other science;
- A. Members will continue to participate with state and federal agency representatives on the APNEP Resource Monitoring and Assessment Teams, whose respective theme areas are Living Aquatic Resources, Water Resources, Atmospheric Resources, Wetland Resources, Terrestrial Resources, and Human Dimensions.
 - B. Evaluate the APAMoN design framework, followed by an initial network design, once these documents are produced by APNEP staff.
- 3) Assess key indicators of A-P ecosystem health.
- A. Members will have the opportunity to be lead authors, co-authors, or reviewers of additional indicator assessments of condition (status and trends) to compliment those produced in the 2012 A-P Ecosystem Assessment.
 - B. Members will have the opportunity to be lead authors, co-authors, or reviewers of diagnostic and forecast assessments as the second and third phases in APNEP assessment following the first phase of condition assessments (Part A).

Mandated Assistance and Proposed Tasks:

- 1) Develop near- and long-term action plans, review draft documents, and make recommendations to the Policy Board on the technical merit of a program, project, activity, or document;

- A. STAC Executive Board drafts, seeks programmatic review, and finalizes 2012-2014 STAC Action Plan.
 - B. Review for technical merit any draft document received from APNEP staff or other APNEP advisory committees.
- 2) Recommend enhancements and additional content to the science & technology components of APNEP's information management system;
- A. Recommend enhancements and content to a bibliographic database of science & technology research literature whose study area includes the Albemarle-Pamlico region or subset thereof. Although the lead responsibility for the database rests with APNEP's Program Scientist, this task would possibly be supported with EPA contracting services, and/or graduate student(s) from local universities.
 - B. Recommend enhancements and content to a database of ecological models (including metadata) whose respective application would be appropriate in the Albemarle-Pamlico region or subset thereof.
- 3) Support the science & technology elements of an APNEP-sponsored conference in fall 2013, featuring research to support the assessment, planning, managing, and monitoring of ecosystem condition.