

## Advisory Group Annual/Semi-Annual Report - SETAC-Advisory Group on Sustainability

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**Date:** 11/16/13 (reporting period: November 2012–October 2013)

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### Organization

This Advisory Group is in its second year and is still struggling to organize its leadership as well as its membership. Newly adopted this year, the leadership style is 1-1-1 (being implemented in the same fashion as the SNA Science Committee) where the Chair is supported by the incoming and past Chairs (who serve as co-chairs). In order to make this transition to the 1:1:1 style, Cynthia Stahl will remain an additional year as chair in order to facilitate the transition, including recruitment of an additional person to serve as incoming chair for 2016. The AGS welcomes Andrew Henderson as incoming chair in 2014 (Table 1). Larry Kapustka, Ron McCormick, Stephanie Giese-Bogdan, Shannon Quinn, and Gene Mancini were also very active in 2013.

**Table 1. AGS members holding chair positions in 2013/2014**

Position	Name	Term Completed	Affiliation
Incoming chair/co-chair	Andrew Henderson	2016	Academia-NA
Chair	Cynthia Stahl	2015	Government-NA
Past Chair/co-chair	Cynthia Stahl	--	Government-NA
Outgoing Chair	Norbert Scholz	2013	Industry-EU

The AGS Steering Committee consists of 13 members, including 1 student, spanning government, industry, consulting and academia, across 3 SETAC Geographic Units (North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific).

### Activities Summary

- The AGS continues to identify sustainability issues that its members wish to discuss and tackle on behalf of SETAC.
- Writing projects from SNA Long Beach meeting (2012) – Three writing teams were formed around these topic areas: 1) we ought to focus on science, 2) it is necessary to decouple economic growth, 3) LCA is sufficient to address sustainability. Writing team #3, led by Stephanie Giese-Bogdan, completed their work, concluding that LCA is a component but not sufficient along to address sustainability, and posted their summary on the AGS website. Writing team #1, led by Shannon Quinn, has produced several drafts for comment and is now working to finalize their product. Writing team #2, led by Ron McCormick, is still drafting.
- Other products – we produced articles in IEAM and sponsored a session at SETAC Europe.
  - Kapustka L, McCormick R, Stahl C. 2013. Informing the Sustainability Dialogue. *Integr Environ Assess Manage* 9:355-356. (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ieam.1435/pdf>)
  - 2013-May: *Whisky Production in a Sustainability Context: Chemical, Ecological, Economical and Social Aspects of the Whisky Industry by the SETAC Advisory Group on Sustainability* (<http://globe.setac.org/2013/may/ecosystem-services.html>)

- 2013-August, Letter to the IEAM Editor: *“Fully Baked” Sustainability using decision analytic principles and ecosystem services by Cynthia Stahl and Todd Bridges*  
(<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ieam.1470/pdf>)
  - 2013-October: Proposed new meeting session tracks discussion by the SETAC Global Science Committee, SETAC North America Science Committee, and Advisory Group on Sustainability  
(<http://globe.setac.org/2013/october/can-sustainability-be-real.html>)
- Proposed annual meeting session tracks – work with SNA SC and Global SC on encouraging the discussion and presentation of works that address broader themes such as sustainability, integration across disciplines, and the role of stakeholders in science policy making, which do not lend themselves to the current session track categorization. The two October 2013 Globe articles 1) introduces this topic to SETAC membership and share the SNA SC discussions to date and 2) offer some thoughts on the connection between sustainability in practice and SETAC meeting content (presentations, discussions, posters, etc.). (Cynthia Stahl, lead for AGS; Emma Lavoie, lead for SNA SC; Trina von Stackelberg, AGS member) The second Globe article is a result of Trina’s response to Steering Committee survey indicating a willingness to take this step to try to make sustainability “real.”
  - Website – Valentina Prado (student member) is the AGS webmaster and has been working to make the site more effective as a communication and discussion tool.
  - Steering Committee survey – In July 2013, the Steering Committee decided to undertake an AGS registered member survey in order to determine why there were so many registered on the website but so few participating in discussions and projects. Question prompts were developed and the 125 member list divided up among Steering Committee members to make the phone survey calls. Report outs of the survey responses will be discussed at the planned AGS meeting in Nashville.

### **Future Plans**

- Steering Committee is encouraging each Geographic Unit (GU) to set up their own Task Group to work on local issues, with the intent to have the GU representatives inform the SC on a regular basis. Hopefully, this will encourage more member participation on the AGS.
- Support SNA SC and Global SC with meeting planning for Vancouver in 2014 and beyond, specifically with regard to SNA SC’s new session tracks proposal development.
- Depending on the member survey results, the AGS and Steering Committee will craft an action plan.

### **Business and Planning Meetings**

- Two conference calls of the AGS Steering Committee were held in 2013 (February, July). One meeting of the AGS membership was held at the SETAC Glasgow meeting (May 2013). Another meeting of the AGS membership is planned for the SETAC NA conference in Nashville (November 2013).

### **Membership Communications**

- The AGS communicates primarily through emails, met in Long Beach (Nov 2012) and in Glasgow (May 2013), plans to meet in Nashville (Nov 2013), and communicates via the AGS website. Periodic calls among the AGS members working on specific projects or among the Steering Committee helped to determine organizational direction and organize activities.
- The AGS provided several communications to the SETAC members at large through the Globe and its website.

### **Issues/Problems**

- Soliciting feedback is a challenge for volunteer committees. This is a particular challenge with the AGS being a new AG. With approximately 125 people registered on the AGS website, it was a challenge to determine where the specific and actionable interests are of this group. The Steering Committee survey (in the process of getting completed as this report is being submitted) is anticipated to help determine the direction, level of interest, willingness to participate and next steps for the AGS. Solicitation of individual members to lead specific projects have contributed to the activity of the AGS in 2013

### **Current Committee**

- The AGS consisted of 125 members (registered on the AGS website) in 2013, representing government, academia, consulting, industry, and NGO sectors.