STAC Workshop Protocol

Introduction

Workshops are a primary mechanism by which the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) of the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) brings the broad expertise of the scientific and technical community to bear on critical and timely issues relevant to the successful restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Workshops convene independent experts and active managers in a dialogue to review current state of knowledge on an issue and outline management concerns and priorities. This provides a format for formulating recommendations from the scientific and technical community on information needs, opportunities for collaborations, and further management actions. STAC workshops are designed to maintain high scientific standards in the consideration, review, and implementation of scientific information in the restoration efforts of the Chesapeake Bay region.

STAC is focusing its limited resources in convening workshops that have outcomes specific to management actions to assist the restoration of the bay and its watershed. Hence, workshops are one form of a lengthy process that the CBP community should be pursuing to expand science-based management for the region’s restoration. For that reason, STAC requests that those proposing workshops outline the development process that has led to the workshop request in the form of a “foundations” document:

The “foundations” document must accompany the proposal and should include the following information:

- Relevant background information for the workshop topic
- Relevance to management needs
- Current issues related to the workshop topic
- Necessary expertise needs (steering committee biographies and identification of potential speakers/moderators)
- A set of questions that will be addressed at the workshop
- Description of workshop expectations/products
- Discuss why a workshop is the appropriate vehicle to address this issue
- A timeline for setting up, convening, and producing workshop product(s)
- Discussion of immediate and long term needs to be fulfilled, including how workshop outputs (products, recommendations, actions) will contribute to that timeline to inform science-based management across the CBP partnership and why a workshop is the appropriate next step.

STAC Proactive Workshops

STAC proactive workshops are an important opportunity for the committee to identify and address issues of concern that have evolved through time in discussions within the CBP partnership, i.e., its committees, GITs (Goal Implementation Teams), workgroups, and action teams. The issues may not have been identified as priorities by the Chesapeake Bay Program but
represent topics that the larger community believes the CBP should address in the management of the ecosystem. In this way, STAC provides guidance on new issues and strengthens the scientific and technical foundations of CBP activities for development and incorporation of these emerging issues into management considerations for future bay and watershed restoration.

PROTOCOL
1. Workshop topics are selected annually by the STAC membership. The number of workshops sponsored is constrained by the available funding.

2. Workshop proposals must be submitted to STAC for approval by the full committee. Proposals must follow the Request for Proposal (RFP) guidelines and include all of the materials listed in the foundations document requirements above. Failure to adequately justify the workshop and its products as an appropriate next step in the development and use of the products in management in the region could lead to return of the proposal without further action; failure to meet reporting deadlines would jeopardize future workshop funding. The STAC Executive Board/RFP Review Committee has the discretion to waive or add requirements as needed.

3. A steering committee must be identified by the workshop requestor(s) which may consist of both STAC members and outside experts with at least one STAC member identified as part of the steering committee. The STAC representative can serve as chair of the steering committee but it is not required for a workshop. The workshop steering committee must include the STAC Executive Secretary or Staff in all teleconferences, meetings, email correspondence, etc. for the workshop. A workshop steering committee will not exceed ten members. The steering committee is responsible for the following tasks:

- Drafting background information, pre-workshop CBP activities, and post-workshop use of workshop results or recommendations in CBP restoration that justify a workshop as an appropriate ‘next step’ in exploration of the topic’s importance to science-based management in the CBP.
- Oversight of all aspects of the workshop, including the workshop proposal.
- Development of workshop agenda and objectives.
- Identification of key participants (and inclusion of relevant short biographies) including the CBP committees, goal implementation teams, workgroups, or other task forces and individuals who will be impacted by or use the information generated by the workshop.
- Development of workshop proceedings and/or products and their timely submission to STAC for publication.
- Determination of whether the final workshop product(s) will require a formal written response from the CBP Management Board (MB) or if the product is serving as an informative document for MB deliberation (Note: A MB response may not be required for proactive workshops).
- Compliance with the allocated STAC budget, not to exceed the funds allocated by STAC. These funds must include travel costs for STAC members involved in the workshop.

4. The STAC Executive Secretary and STAC staff can help provide logistical support for the workshops, or can arrange for independent support as needed. When necessary, STAC staff
will notify workshop leads in their request for a response that it must be within 48 hours or work will not be able to continue, and workshop leads are asked to respond within that time frame or they risk jeopardizing the goal of the workshop.

5. The steering committee will be assigned a web page accessible through the STAC website for document distribution and information sharing among steering committee members, workshop participants, and interested parties. The steering committee will be responsible for maintaining posted information with technical support provided by the STAC Executive Secretary or Staff.

6. Registration fees may not be charged for workshop participants unless approved in advance by the STAC Executive Secretary.

7. The STAC Executive Secretary is the only person authorized to execute contracts and only verbal or written offers issued by the STAC Executive Secretary will be honored. It is atypical for STAC to support funding for Honoraria and/or consultation fees, but if approved by STAC, these funds must be written into the workshop proposal. The monetary amount should not exceed the allowable amount identified in CRC’s cooperative agreement.

8. STAC has discretion over the number of participants invited to the workshop, as determined by the function of the session. For example, a workshop directed toward information dissemination may benefit from a large number of participants, whereas a directed, problem-solving session may function more efficiently with a small group.

9. A written report must be developed by the workshop steering committee following any workshop. The report’s format, length, anticipated recommendations, and use of the workshop materials in future CBP decisions, management, or policies will be determined by the workshop steering committee and included in the workshop proposal. The workshop steering committee may request, but must assist in press releases or factsheets as additional products to the completed written report. Workshop publications, reports, and proceedings are subject to the STAC Publication Protocol.

10. Workshops, but not workshop products, must be completed in the fiscal year for which they are approved. The STAC fiscal year runs from June 1 – May 31.

11. Workshop reports addressing all aspects above (2, 3, and 8) must be completed and forwarded to STAC no more than 90 days after the completion of the workshop unless an alternate schedule has been approved by STAC.

12. Final review, distribution, and web posting will be completed by STAC within six weeks of receipt of the workshop report unless an alternate deadline is approved by STAC.

13. STAC reserves the right to release workshop products to the public. STAC also reserves the right to create additional public documents, such as factsheets or press releases, from workshop products.
14. Failure to meet reporting deadlines or follow protocols may jeopardize future workshop funding.

**STAC Responsive Workshops**

STAC responsive workshops are held in direct response to requests for assistance from the Chesapeake Bay Program. STAC provides support to convene the workshops in order to gather critically needed information on a topic that has been developed through prior deliberations and discussions within the CBP committees, GITs, workgroups, or action teams. These workshops provide a flexible response mechanism to provide additional scientific and technical information and guidance on high priority issues that have been extensively explored within the partnership as they arise in the management of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In submitting a responsive workshop proposal, requestors agree to adhere to the protocols outlined below.

**PROTOCOL**

1. Workshop topics are selected annually. A Request for Proposals (RFP) is released by STAC in January of each year, inviting submission of workshop topics from the Chesapeake Bay Program. Proposals submitted for consideration must be accompanied by a letter of support or email from the committee or Goal Implementation Team (GIT) chair, indicating that the proposal is a priority for the primary governance units of the CBP. Further, substantial detail on previous CBP discussions and deliberations on the topic, use of the workshop products for future science-based management in the partnership, and specific activities to be pursued within the partnership (delivery at committees, GITs, etc., drafting management recommendations to the management board or modeling revisions to the modeling workgroup, and dialog with CBP administrators at the CBPO, PSC, or EC, etc.) is required. The STAC Executive Board/RFP Review Committee has discretion to waive or add requirements as needed.

2. Workshop proposals must be submitted to STAC for approval by the full committee. Proposals must follow the Request for Proposal (RFP) guidelines. Each workshop proposal must result in a written report, expected short- and long-term uses, and must include a timeline for report submission and post-report activities on the workshop’s results and recommendations within the partnership. Failure to meet report submission deadlines will jeopardize future workshop funding.

3. A steering committee must be identified by the workshop requestor(s) which may consist of both STAC members and outside experts with at least one STAC member identified as part of the steering committee; (short biographies of key participants or steering committee (SC) members should be provided to emphasize the expertise needed for advancement of the issue or skills in implementing recommendations in science-based management). The STAC representative can serve as the chair of the steering committee but STAC chairmanship is not required for a workshop. The workshop steering committee must include the STAC Executive Secretary or Staff in all teleconferences, meetings, email correspondence, etc. for all aspects of the workshop. A workshop steering committee will not exceed ten members. The steering committee is responsible for the following tasks:
• Oversight of all aspects of the workshop, including the workshop proposal.
• Development of workshop agenda and objectives.
• Identification of key participants, including the CBP committees, goal implementation teams, workgroups, or task forces that would receive workshop results and encouragement for adoption of workshop outcomes in their future decisions.
• Identification of CBP staff to provide logistical and/or technical support for the workshop.
• Development of workshop proceedings and/or products and their timely submission to STAC for publication.
• Agreement on the final workshop product(s) request for a formal written response from the CBP Management Board (MB) and assistance in developing that request (Note: A MB response is required for responsive workshops).
• Compliance with the allocated STAC budget, not to exceed the funds allocated by STAC. These funds must include travel costs for STAC members involved in the workshop.

4. The STAC Executive Secretary and STAC staff will provide logistical support for the workshops, or can arrange for independent support as needed. When necessary, STAC staff will notify workshop leads in their request for a response that it must be within 48 hours or work will not be able to continue, and workshop leads are asked to respond within that time frame or they risk jeopardizing the goal of the workshop.

5. The steering committee will be assigned a web page accessible through the STAC website for documentation distribution and information sharing among the SC; SC members will be responsible for maintaining posted information with technical support provide by the STAC Executive Secretary or Staff.

6. Registration fees for participants may not be charged unless approved in advance by the STAC Executive Secretary.

7. The STAC Executive Secretary is the only person authorized to execute contracts and only verbal or written offers issued by the STAC Executive Secretary will be honored. It is atypical for STAC to support funding for Honoraria and/or consultation fees, but if approved by STAC, these funds must be written into the workshop proposal. The monetary amount should not exceed the allowable amount identified in CRC’s cooperative agreement.

8. STAC, in conjunction with the steering committee, has discretion over the number of participants invited to the workshop, as determined by the function of the session. For example, a workshop directed toward information dissemination may benefit from a large number of participants, whereas a directed, problem-solving session may function more efficiently with a small group.

9. A written report must be developed by the workshop steering committee following any workshop. The report’s format, length, anticipated recommendations, and use of the workshop materials in future CBP decisions, management, or policies will be determined by the workshop steering committee and included in the workshop proposal. The workshop steering committee may request, but must assist in press releases or factsheets as additional
products to the completed written report. Workshop publications, reports, and proceedings will be subject to the STAC Publications Protocol.

10. Workshops, but not workshop products, must be completed in the fiscal year for which they are approved. The STAC fiscal year runs from June 1 – May 31.

11. Workshop reports and/or projects addressing all aspects above (1-3, 8) must be completed and forwarded to STAC no more than 90 days after the completion of the workshop unless an alternate schedule has been approved by STAC.

12. Final review, distribution, and web posting will be completed by STAC within six weeks of the receipt of a workshop report unless an alternate deadline is approved by STAC.

13. STAC reserves the right to release workshop products to the public. STAC also reserves the right to create additional public documents, such as factsheets or press releases, from workshop products.

14. Failure to meet reporting deadlines or follow protocols may jeopardize future workshop funding.

Amendments to Workshop Protocols
The STAC Executive Board and/or membership establish the STAC Workshop Protocols and can create and alter them as necessary with a majority vote.