
Great Lakes Science Advisory Board
Research Coordination Committee
Meeting #5

October 14-15, 2015
IJC Great Lakes Regional Office Board Room
100 Ouellette Avenue, 8th Floor, Windsor, ON N9A 6T3

PARTICIPANTS

RCC Members: Gavin Christie (Canadian co-chair), Norman Grannemann (U.S. co-chair), Tareq Al-Zabet, Patricia Chambers, Val Klump, Deborah Lee, Yves Michaud, Andrew Muir, Thomas Speth, Michael Twiss, Christopher Winslow

IJC Staff: Lizhu Wang, Glenn Benoy, Mark Burrows, Matthew Child, Ankita Mandelia, Trish Morris, Ellen Perschbacher, Vic Serveiss

MEETING RECORD

1. Introduction and Approval of Agenda

GLRO director provided a warm welcome remark, especially to the two new RCC members. The agenda was introduced and approved. A round table roll call was conducted and each identified one of her/his most important activities on the Great Lakes.

2. Report and discuss progress on Indicator Data Gap Analysis project

A presentation summarizing the completed work and current status of the indicator data gap analysis project was given to the RCC by the project contractors. The gap analysis focused on indicators that were different from State of the Great Lakes indicators. The contractors were in the process of preparing and revising the report. A short summary of the presentation is presented below, followed by a summary of the discussion that took place after the discussion.

Presentation key points:

- The contractor calculated 8 indicators and 28 metrics.
- This project focused on the indicators that are not included in the State of the Great Lakes indicators.
- Many indicators lack data or require clarification.
- Trends of indicators that the contractors have obtained data were presented.

Discussion Summary:

- RCC members were impressed with the work they have done, especially given the limited access to data.
- The contractor was provided with the State of the Great Lakes indicators descriptions as they were being developed to avoid overlap.
- It is clarified that the purpose of this analysis is not to criticize the State of the Great Lakes Report (SOGLR) effort, but to determine where data collection gaps can be filled.
- The contractor ran into various obstacles which generally ended with the data owners who are not willing to share or do not have permission to release the data. A discussion on data accessibility was followed.
- The question of where not-yet-interpreted raw data exists vs. where raw data does not exist was raised. This led to a discussion about data standards; during which it was mentioned that though data collection methodology varies, data should be such that calculations made from it can be reproduced – different jurisdictions should be able to interpret the data so that they reach the same conclusions. Data should be made publically available in its summarized form. The IJC’s role is to bring together data from both sides of the border to provide binational data for policy recommendations.
- It was mentioned that there is a U.S. federal requirement that all federal funded research data must be made available within one year of collection. There is some debate as to what one year means (for example, from when fish are caught, or from when contaminants in those fish are measured).
- With the level of expertise, RCC can improve the report and help the next contractor hone the indicator data message.

3. Report and discuss progress and next steps on Identifying Future Improvements on Great Lakes Indicators project

Project Summary:

- The utmost goals of the project are to compare SOGLR indicators with GLWQA objectives to identify gaps (e.g., key progress on any of the objectives have not been assessed by the SOGLR indicators), and to identify indicators/measures in IJC indicator list (indicators/measures have no or have only partial data) that can be used to fill the gaps for future (in 2020 reporting cycle and beyond).
- The project work group members were reconfirmed, including six RCC, two SAB, one WQB, and two HPAB members.
- IJC staff attended the kickoff meeting with the contractor. The contractor discussed their understanding of the project and provided a proposed table of contents for the report of this project for input. The contractor is scheduling a Webinar with the workgroup in November and a workshop in December, 2015.

Discussion Summary:

- The contractor will have the first draft report of the indicator data gap analysis project within a couple of weeks.
- It was raised that for future indicators, does the RCC have the capacity for adequate data acquisition and assessment? It was explained that the process of this project is to determine which indicators have adequate data, partial data, or no data.
- It was brought up that if RCC will consider alternatives to indicators, but the committee was reminded that this project will focus on the list of indicators identified by IJC. The project has a very limited budget and the contractor likely will not have expertise in all of these indicators.
- Additional ideas included connecting the future indicators to emerging monitoring technologies, examining indicator measures, and how to make judgements around these indicators.
- Feedback on the proposed Table of Contents provided by the contractor:
 - Chapter 3 overlaps with the Indicator Data Gap Analysis project;
 - Chapter 5 should be covered by SOGLR, which is likely mentioned in the Gap Analysis report;
 - Chapter 4 is the critical part.
- It was emphasized that the RCC's effort is not meant to criticize SOGLR, but to fill in gaps, with a vision of how the Great Lakes indicators will look like in the future years.

4. Report and discuss progress and next steps on Research Inventory project

Project Introduction:

- The concept of the project, the progress to date, and the content of the report were summarized. The workgroup had discussed with the contractors about combining the three revision options, and they are working on scoping out a budget. At the October Semi-Annual Meeting, RCC will seek Commissioners' approval to develop a work plan for the project.
- It was mentioned that at the GLOS meeting the previous week virtuous data management was discussed, but the unique aspect of the IJC's inventory is it is a binational research project database, reporting on trends of both Canadian and U.S. research.

Project Discussion:

- It was clarified that this is an inventory of projects, not data. The inventory is useful to generate reports about what research is being conducted, even if not every project in the basin is included.
- It was discussed that if the RCC should request annual resources for maintenance – the point was supported that it would be useful to include a data manager and librarian for long-term costs.

- It was mentioned that the GLFC requires projects that receive funding from GLFC to be listed in the inventory in order to receive funding. Almost all other agencies have lists of projects that they funded.

5. Report and discuss progress on Emerging Monitoring Technology project

Project Summary:

- The draft project report was distributed;
- Over half of the contacted people replied to the survey;
- About half of emerging technologies are used by academics.

Discussion Summary:

- It was suggested that RCC may want to organize a session at the next IAGLR, and the lead of the project is planning to submit a manuscript from this project.
- It could be helpful to include examples of success stories of using emerging technologies from Lake Erie in the report and/or the manuscript to demonstrate the efficacy of new technologies and cost/benefits. RCC may want to make recommendation to promote use of new technologies by the Parties.

6. Update on IJC Triennial Assessment Progress Report (TAP) and discussion

Project Summary:

IJC Staff made two presentations on the scope and process of the TAP. Most of the information is available in the slides. It was mentioned that there has already been a little slippage in the Parties' timeline – the report to the public will be available in September rather than August. The Parties' report will not be out until 2017. January 2017 is the target date for submitting a draft of TAP report to the Parties. The target date for the Boards input to the Commission is May 2016.

Project Discussion:

- It was commented how RCC members should handle the conflict of interest in evaluating the Progress of the Parties when many of the members are employed by the Parties. It would be up to individual RCC members' judgement.
- IJC staff requested that RCC send comments to IJC regarding if the outline is on target with scope and content; RCC members was encouraged to help with writing and reviewing. The following RCC members expressed interests on specific Chapters:
 - 4.1 – Safe Drinking Water – Thomas Speth
 - 4.2 – Swimming/Recreation – Thomas Speth, Norm Grannemann
 - 4.3 – Consumption Fish & Wildlife – Tareq Al-Zabet
 - 4.4 – Pollutants – Michael Twiss
 - 4.5 – Wetlands/Habitat – Chris Winslow, Debbie Lee, Andrew Muir
 - 4.6 – Nutrients/HABs – Val Klump, Patricia Chambers, Chris Winslow, Michael Twiss, Thomas Speth

- 4.7 – AIS – Gavin Christie, Andrew Muir, Chris Winslow
- 4.8 – Contamination Groundwater – Yves Michaud, Norm Grannemann
- 4.9 – Other (AOC, LAMP, CSMI, Climate Change) – Gavin Christie, Debbie Lee, Michael Twiss

7. Brainstorm and develop RCC’s new activities for the next year and beyond

- Address issues identified by the current work – develop and monitor indicators of Great Lakes health for the next 20 years; develop a holistic shared vision for the future of the Great Lakes.
- Modeling – coordination of existing modeling efforts and data processing; focusing on P and N loading models; how climate change is incorporated into models; what strength and weakness of the models are; and what kind models IJC would like to recommend.
- CSMI – review approach, connection with LAMP planning, resources, engagement, and vessel coordination.
- Adaptive Management – help with linkages among adaptive management activities (GLRI, GLAM, Annex 4); consider experimental vs. reactive approaches (have a workshop).
- Climate Change – Great Lakes need to be better linked to global picture; what climate science is needed for RCC’s goals.
- Data Accessibility – too many uncoordinated efforts, may want to consider a binational Great Lakes effort; Annex 10 has a data sharing and management task team.
- Research Vessel Coordination – improve integration of fleet activities; coordinate vessel/cruise/resources.
- Larger observing systems – several systems were mentioned; coordinate with cabled networks; involve New Technologies, remote sensing/satellite/LiDAR.

Next Steps:

- Prioritize the discussed topics and turn the high priority topics into work plans;
- Integrate RCC’s priority topics with Annex Committees and other IJC boards.

8. Discussion on input on review of LAMP

- The guidance document that the RCC received prior to the meeting was summarized. IJC staff is asking RCC to assist in providing advice and recommendations. Once the LAMP is received, the IJC must give feedback in about 3 months.
- RCC expressed an overall interest in assisting with the review, but level and specific areas of interest will depend on the documents. It was determined that Michael Twiss will help on the review. The report may be made available through Michael to the entire RCC for those who may be interested in providing reviews.
- It was suggested that a cross-board review may be helpful.

9. Update on Microplastics Workshop

- The microplastics issue was introduced and IJC Staff is in the process of planning of holding a comprehensive, science, policy, and outreach workshop about microplastics in April. The workshop will be structured around 4 topics: state of science, strategies, industry initiatives, and cleanup efforts and public outreach.
- RCC is interested in making suggestions on the planning of the workshop.
- IJC staff will send request of input on topics, speakers, and participants.
- The workshop is scheduled for April 26-27, and it is meant to be an invited expert workshop, not open to public.

10. Prepare RCC's presentation at the Oct Semi-Annual Meeting

- The committee agreed that it should start with a brief update piece, describing current work and any issues. There is a lot of material that the RCC can discuss. Points that should be raised include:
- Indicators interaction with Annex 10, Ecosystem Indicator Task Team leads;
- A summary of the Future Direction ideas (discussed above) – the RCC should prioritize its ideas for the Commission
- A question was raised about RCC's role in finding a data-sharing mechanism or addressing data quality issues.

11. Other topics

- Crude oil transportation – IJC is doing a watching brief, also has a pipeline watching brief; IJC does not have an official position;

12. Plan for the next meeting:

- It was decided that the next face-to-face meeting will be held during the April Semi-Annual Meeting to utilize the networking opportunity and face time with Commissioners.
- The next RCC call will be near the end of November; RCC will hold bimonthly calls after that.

INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION
Great Lakes Science Advisory Board

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Remote Participation: **1-877-413-4781**, Access Code: **956 2917**

DRAFT AGENDA

October 14 Time (EDT)	Topics
12:00-2:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Introduction: welcome and review the agenda2. Report and discuss progress on Indicator Data Gap Analysis project (including a 20-minute presentation from the contractors)3. Report and discuss progress and next steps on Identifying Future Improvements to Great Lakes Indicators project
2:15-2:30	Health Break
2:30-5:00	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Report and discuss progress and next steps on Research Inventory project5. Report and discuss progress on Emerging Monitoring Technology project6. Update on IJC Triennial Assessment Progress Report (a presentation from the TAP Team) and discussion.

October 15 Time (EDT)	Topics
8:30-10:30	7. Brainstorm and develop RCC's new activities for next year and beyond
10:30-10:45	Health Break
10:45-12:00	8. Discussion on input on review of LAMP 9. Update on possible microplastics Workshop 10. Prepare RCC's presentation at the Oct Semi-Annual Meeting 11. Other topics 12. Plan for the next meeting