



**IJC Science Advisory Board – Science Priority Committee  
Forty-third Meeting  
Meeting Summary**

**October 19, 2022 – 9:00am-12:00pm Eastern Time**

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<b>U.S. Members</b>	<b>Canadian Members</b>	<b>Commission Staff</b>
Lucinda Johnson (Co-Chair)	Gail Krantzberg (Co-Chair)	Matthew Child (Secretary)
Mike Murray	John Livernois	Victor Serveiss
Mic Isham	Jerome Marty	Raj Bejankiwar
Bob Sterner	Mike McKay	
Donna Kashian	Karen Kidd	
	Nandita Basu	

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Regrets: Maggie Xenopoulos, Drew Gronewold, Joe DePinto

Guest: Jen Vanator

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The U.S. Co-Chair welcomed members to the meeting, which was attended both in-person and virtually. Round table introductions were completed, with many of the members who attended in-person remarking on how wonderful it was to convene together after a three-year suspension of face-to-face meetings due to the pandemic.

The September 19, 2022 meeting record was approved by consensus.

The meeting agenda was approved by consensus.

**2. Project Updates**

Great Lakes Early Warning System – Phase 2 (Lucinda Johnson)

A project workshop was held on September 21+22, 2022 and was attended by ~25 participants. The focus of the workshop was to ‘test’ the draft early warning system framework through three case studies (non-P nutrients, fish pathogens, and PFAS); overall the draft framework held up quite well. The workshop proceedings will be forwarded to the work group soon. The draft project contractor report is expected early in 2023, and a work group report will be prepared by spring, 2023. In the discussion that followed, it was noted that the GLEWS project links to the Water Quality Board’s Great Lakes Horizons project. It was also observed that the GLEWS project could be helpful for

identifying future SAB work plan topics, which would be a novel application of the project that was not previously considered.

#### Nutrients Synthesis (Mike Murray & John Livernois)

The draft work group report has been discussed with the Water Quality Board via a recent oral briefing. Based on input received from WQB, as well as discussion at the September 2022 SPC meeting, the work group report is being revised with particular emphasis on the recommendations. The final draft report will be sent to the SPC and WQB for a red flag review.

#### Traditional Ecological Knowledge (Mic Isham & Jerome Marty)

The contractor has completed the literature review, and a listening session was held with members of the Akwesasne Mohawk community in September, 2022. Additional listening sessions are proving difficult to schedule, although it is hoped that up to three additional sessions will be completed in spring/summer 2023.

Several insights have been gleaned from the project so far:

- Indigenous Knowledge (IK) is a lived experience, and meeting in-person is essential to bridging IK and western science;
- Considering history and context is essential to understanding current relationships and opportunities;
- For IK to be transmitted it is essential that language learning be supported; and,
- Trust and transparency are essential for developing respectful relationships.

In the discussion that followed a number of points were raised:

- McMaster University's Water Without Borders program participants would welcome the opportunity to observe one of the community listening sessions;
- The SAB should consider including Indigenous placenames in SAB reporting;
- Indigenous Elders like to see youth at community engagements, so that should be pursued to the degree possible;
- IJC Commissioners are prioritizing Indigenous engagement, and have directed staff to include a standing item on the topic at future IJC Executive Meetings;
- Many organizations and entities are prioritizing Indigenous engagement, so it is good to see SAB advancing the topic as well.

#### Great Lakes Winter Science (Mike McKay & staff)

A project contractor has been selected and a work group has been assembled; an Indigenous representative is still being sought. The first meeting of the work group was held recently. During that meeting, the study objectives and contractor tasks were reviewed. The draft literature review will build on the outputs from a 2019 Cooperative Institute for Great Lakes Research workshop, and will assess the state of winter science and binational governance to support winter science in the Great Lakes. The review will consider shoulder seasons, spatial variability and the concept of ecological memory. Three project workshops are planned, with the first one focusing on winter science priorities; suggestions for subject matter experts to join the project workshops are welcomed. It was suggested that early career researchers be considered for workshop participation.

#### Valuation of Ecosystem Services (John Livernois)

Contractor procurement has been delayed, although the contracting process is progressing. A project work group has been formed; Indigenous representation has been sought but so far an

Indigenous perspective has not been confirmed. The literature review is underway, which will be used to inform the project workshop which is planned for 2023. It was noted that the Biden Administration recently released a national strategy to develop a U.S. system of natural capital accounting.

#### Microplastics Monitoring & Risk Assessment (Karen Kidd)

A contractor has been selected and a work group is currently being formed. Initial project tasks include a literature review and assembling a database that summarized available Great Lakes monitoring data and toxicity test data. An IAGLR 2023 session abstract is also planned. An initial meeting of the work group will be held in November. In the discussion that followed it was clarified that the risk assessment will focus on ecological risk and will emulate work done by the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project.

### **3. Great Lakes Decadal Science Strategy**

Staff reported that earlier in the week the Commission approved the Science Strategy for distribution to the Parties and posting to the SAB website. A transmittal cover letter will be developed concurrently with desktop layout of the Summary Report, and the packet is expected to be transmitted to the governments by the end of November.

Board members discussed advancing the Strategy through convening a coalition of willing partners to develop a more detailed Science Plan that includes information on science gaps, funding requirements, and associated governance arrangements. The participation of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and the Great Lakes Commission is expected, since each Commission reaches different but overlapping constituencies. It is expected that additional IJC resources will be required to develop the Science Plan and engage with the executive and legislative branches of government to build support for its implementation.

An IAGLR 2023 session or town hall meeting will be proposed, that includes a panel discussion to elicit perspectives on advancing the Strategy.

It was noted that there are a number of legislators who have shown an abiding interest in the Great Lakes, and briefing them and/or their staff should be pursued. Once the Strategy has been submitted to the governments, a detailed roll-out plan will be finalized which is expected to include specific opportunities to discuss the Strategy (and anticipated Science Plan) with numerous constituencies and entities.

### **4. Triennial Assessment of Progress**

#### Triennial Assessment of Progress

Individual TAP report sections are being prepared by staff, and Board members who self-identified to provide technical input to sections may hear from the writing team prior to November 18, 2022. Following that date, draft sections will be compiled and a contract technical writer will prepare a full draft report. The draft report is expected to be ready for Board review by ~March, 2023. The Commission is aiming for public release in early fall, 2023.

In the discussion that followed it was clarified that not all sections will have associated recommendations. It was noted that the EPA's Board of Scientific Counselors separates 'suggestions' from 'recommendations' in its reports, and a similar approach could be utilized for the TAP report. Similarly, it was noted that expressing very clear findings can logically point to necessary next steps in the eyes of a reviewer.

Initial engagements on the TAP report were held during the September 2022 Great Lakes Public Forum, which was held in Niagara Falls, ON as a hybrid event. It was noted that the Commission needs to be careful to clarify that their engagements are 'listening sessions' so attendees understand that input will not be discussed in detail during the event. It was noted that although the two TAP engagements held as part of the Forum were well attended and yielded a lot of good input, the evening session held off-site was poorly attended and the Commission should reflect on why that is and make any necessary adjustments for next time. It was noted that public attendance at events has generally declined since the earlier days of the environmental movement, which is due to several factors.

## **5. Future Work Plans**

There was general recognition that the SPC is very busy with project work – in addition to four ongoing projects, three additional projects are just getting underway. Members are encouraged to identify new project ideas so that they can be documented and considered for subsequent work plan cycles.

There was general agreement that the Great Lakes Decadal Science Strategy will need additional investments to collaboratively develop a more detailed Science Plan that includes granular information on science gaps, funding needs, and governance arrangements. There was also general agreement that meaningfully interweaving Indigenous Knowledge into IJC and Board initiatives will require a long term commitment.

## **6. Semi-Annual Appearance & SAB meeting preparation**

The draft SPC appearance slides were reviewed and minor revisions were completed.

There was general agreement that advancing the Great Lakes Decadal Science Strategy should be discussed in detail at the SAB meeting. It was clarified that now that we have Commission approval of the Strategy, a detailed Strategy 'roll-out' plan will be prepared that includes information on needed next steps to develop a Science Plan. It was suggested that next steps should include the development of an inspiring name; branding and marketing the initiative will be important.

Looking ahead to subsequent Semi-Annual meetings, which (hopefully!) will continue to be in-person, the SPC should consider inviting a guest speaker from the locale that the meetings are held.

## **7. Other Business & Adjournment**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

*Meeting record prepared by Matthew Child and reviewed by Lucinda Johnson and Gail Krantzberg.  
Please forward any errors or omissions to [matthew.child@ijc.org](mailto:matthew.child@ijc.org)*