



**IJC Science Advisory Board – Science Priority Committee  
Thirty Third Meeting  
Videoconference Meeting Summary**

**September 23, 2020 11:00am-12:30pm**

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<b>U.S. Members</b>	<b>Canadian Members</b>	<b>Commission Staff</b>
Carol Miller (Co-Chair)	Jeff Ridal (Co-Chair)	Matthew Child (Secretary)
Mike Murray	Karen Kidd	Victor Serveiss
Mic Isham	Jerome Marty	Rob Phillips
Lucinda Johnson	Gail Krantzberg	Li Wang
Joe DePinto	Maggie Xenopoulos	Mark Burrows
Drew Gronewold	John Livernois	David Burden
Mike Slimak	Nandita Basu	

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Guest: Jen Vanator

**1. Welcome and Introductions, and Approval of Draft Agenda**

The Canadian Co-Chair chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone to the videoconference. A special welcome was extended to the SPC's newest member, Dr. Nandita Basu. Dr. Basu described her background and research interests, which was followed by round table introductions by all members.

The draft agenda was approved by consensus.

**2. Updates**

Co-Chairs Monitoring Priority

The notes from the August 24, 2020 videoconference between advisory board Co-Chairs and Commissioners were reviewed. The backgrounder discussed during the August 24 call was prepared by the Water Quality Board U.S. Chair with input from all advisory boards. Commissioners are interested in the topic and have asked the board Co-Chairs to further develop the backgrounder to include specific next steps. The Co-Chairs will be meeting the week of September 28, 2020 to discuss. In the discussion that followed the following points were raised:

- There was general agreement that data management and communication is a critical element that should be further developed as part of next steps.
- There are several organizations that play a coordinating role in monitoring in the Great Lakes basin. The IJC should consider how it can add value to existing activities.

- The SPC's 2018 *Information Coordination and Flow* report holds insights for effectively using monitoring data and information. Phase 2 of the SPC's *Great Lakes Early Warning System*, which is just getting underway, will give some consideration to data and analytics, and using them appropriately.
- U.S. datasets are often better harmonized than Canadian datasets for the Great Lakes basin.
- Traditional ecological knowledge considers the lakes as an interconnected system, and this holistic approach should be applied to monitoring systems.
- A recent survey completed for the SAB's *Great Lakes Science Plan* project identified science coordination as an important, and unfulfilled, need.

#### 2020 Triennial Assessment of Progress Report

Board members were reminded that they were given an opportunity to review the draft TAP report in spring, 2020 and many helpful comments were incorporated into the draft that was provided to Commissioners. Commissioners requested several revisions to the report which have been addressed by staff, and a final draft report is currently being reviewed by Commissioners.

#### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Agreement will occur in 2022. At the June, 2020 SPC meeting the SPC discussed some ideas to celebrate that anniversary, including a proposal by Lucinda Johnson and colleagues to revise the Great Lakes Atlas. The Water Quality Board has also formed a work group of WQB members to identify opportunities. Staff noted that during Commissioners' September Executive Meeting, Commissioners indicated they want to learn more about the Parties' plans for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, then consider if and how the Commission can contribute. In the discussion that followed, several SPC members suggested that IJC should be contributing to Anniversary events, and there was general agreement that the topic should be discussed further at the October, 2020 SPC and SAB meetings.

### **3. Ongoing Project Updates**

#### Great Lakes Science Plan (Gail Krantzberg)

The first round of a three-round set of online surveys has been completed. The survey was sent to approximately 1,000 scientists and managers and over 200 responses were received. A range of topics related to Great Lakes science needs were explored, and the first round of the survey went beyond natural sciences and included human health, social science and traditional ecological knowledge. Initial impressions from the survey results include the importance placed on science coordination, and a lack of diversity in the backgrounds of respondents to the survey that will need to be overcome when preparing the Science Plan. In the coming weeks the survey results will be compiled, and a second round of survey questions will be developed related to priority areas identified through the first round.

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

The GLEWS Phase 2 project was approved by the Commission in the spring, and project contractors (LimnoTech and AECOM) were confirmed in September. A work group of IJC advisory board and external members has been confirmed, with excellent cross-board representation. The core team will be meeting with the contractors in the coming week, and the inaugural work group meeting will be scheduling for later this fall. The GLEWS 2 project will be considered as part of an application being prepared by Lucinda Johnson and Michael Twiss for the National Science Foundation's Coastlines and People (CoPe) Program.

#### Nutrients Synthesis (Michael Murray and John Livernois)

The project was approved by the Commission in the spring, and a project contractor (LimnoTech) was confirmed in September. The project will summarize key findings and recommendations from recent IJC nutrients-related reports and use those insights to assess Lake Erie Domestic Action Plans and their potential to adequately address nutrients-related impairments. Work group membership is currently being identified. Nandita Basu volunteered to join the project work group.

#### HPAB's Harmonized Fish Consumption Advisory Work Plan (Jeff Ridal)

This project has been affected directly by COVID, and engagement with the Akwesasne community has been delayed due to the pandemic. Contracting is advancing, however, and compilation and analysis of fish contaminant data will be proceeding once contracts are finalized.

#### RCC's Connecting Channels (Jeff Ridal)

The contractor report is complete, and a draft work group report has been developed. A work group call will be scheduled soon to discuss the draft report, and SPC member input on the draft report would be welcomed.

**Action:** Secretary to circulate the draft Connecting Channels work group report for SPC member input.

#### **4. New Work Plan**

A couple of calls were held over the summer to identify key elements of a new SPC work plan on traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). Work plan development is being led by Mic Isham and Jerome Marty, and additional SPC participation would be welcomed. The work plan will focus on key challenges and barriers on integrating TEK into the IJC model, and identification of opportunities to improve Indigenous engagement and encourage incorporation of TEK into IJC products. The work plan will link to recent work by the Annex 10 TEK Task Team.

In the discussion that followed it was clarified that a high-level overview of the work plan should be in place by the October 23 SPC Appearance. Based on Commission feedback at the Appearance, the work plan should be fully developed for funding submission by December.

**Action:** SPC members are invited to volunteer for the TEK work group.

**Action:** Staff to arrange a call with work group members to discuss work plan linkages with ongoing IJC activities.

#### **5. IJC Fall Semi-Annual Meeting**

Input was sought from SPC members on agenda items for the October 22 SPC and SAB meetings, and the October 23 Appearance with Commissioners.

For the meetings the following suggestions were made:

- Have detailed discussions about the Science Plan project and its link to the GLEWS 2 project, the RCC Connecting Channels work group report, and the TEK work plan.

- Discuss opportunities for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Agreement, including the Great Lakes Atlas proposed by Lucinda Johnson and colleagues, and what the WQB has under consideration.
- Discuss advancing the Co-Chairs Monitoring Priority backgrounder.

For the Appearance the following points were raised:

- The Appearance PowerPoint template has been revised and includes an emphasis on priorities moving forward, including work plan development and seeking Commission input on same. Suggestions for improving the efficacy of IJC and Board products and advice would also be welcomed.
- Other topics to consider for the SPC Appearance include the Co-Chairs Monitoring Priority, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Agreement, and opportunities for IJC to influence the economic recovery after the pandemic.
- There was general agreement that the Appearance slides and talking points should be discussed and finalized during the October 22 SPC meeting.

**Action:** Secretary to circulate the Commission's 2019-2023 Priorities to SPC members (note that member received the document previously).

## **6. Other Business & Adjournment**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

*Meeting record prepared by Matthew Child and reviewed by Carol Miller and Jeff Ridal.  
Please forward any errors or omissions to [childm@windsor.ijc.org](mailto:childm@windsor.ijc.org)*