



**IJC Science Advisory Board – Science Priority Committee
Fifty-sixth Meeting
Meeting Summary**

February 13, 2025 – 11:30am – 1:00pm Eastern Time

U.S. Members	Canadian Members	Commission Staff
Lucinda Johnson (Co-Chair)	Gail Krantzberg (Co-Chair)	Matthew Child (Secretary)
Donna Kashian	Jérôme Marty	Jo Werba
Laura Johnson	Maggie Xenopoulos	Lyne Sabourin
Margaret Noodin	John Livernois	Heather Stirratt
Marta Venier	Karen Kidd	Allison Voglesong Zejnati
	Nandita Basu	Rachel Wyatt
		Raj Bejankiwar
		Rajendra Poudel

Regrets: Drew Gronewold, Mike McKay, Bob Sterner

1. Welcome and Introductions

The U.S. Co-Chair welcomed members to the meeting, and round table introductions were completed. The October 23, 2024 meeting record was acknowledged. The meeting agenda was approved by consensus.

Departing members John Livernois and Bob Sterner were acknowledged. The Science Advisory Board is deeply appreciative of their service and wishes them well with their next adventures!

2. Ongoing Project Updates

Great Lakes Winter Science (Maggie Xenopoulos)

The final draft contractor report and final draft Work Group summary report has been sent to the SAB for red flag review. Once the reports are finalized, they will be transmitted to the Commission for an approval decision. A project Communications Plan is under development to guide report rollout and dissemination activities, and a manuscript is in preparation.

Great Lakes Science Plan (Gail Krantzberg)

Since the last SPC meeting a series of one-on-one engagements with federal agency science providers have been completed. The project Collaborative recently met to discuss ongoing progress, and plan for the next workshop on Centers of Excellence and workforce development that

is scheduled for April 9&10 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. It was noted that the Science Plan will need to show relevance to a strong economy and public safety.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (Jérôme Marty & Margaret Noodin)

The final project convening was held in November 2024 near Thunder Bay, Ontario. A draft report is being prepared that is intended as an internal document to guide the IJC's interweaving of Indigenous science and western science into the development of its science advice. In the discussion that followed a number of points were raised:

- The IJC will need to continue to work at relationship building with Indigenous communities.
- Advancing the complementarity of Indigenous science with western science is a topic that has come up during Science Plan discussions, especially related to Centers of Excellence for Indigenous Knowledge.
- Engagements undertaken as part of the project have consistently noted the importance of Indigenous-led environmental education of Indigenous youth.
- Wayne State University and the University of Windsor are co-developing a Certificate in Indigenous Knowledge.

Great Lakes Early Warning System (Lucinda Johnson)

The GLEWS Pilot Project request-for-proposals process has concluded, and staff will be meeting in the coming days to evaluate and select a preferred vendor; a contract should be finalized in the coming weeks. The RCC's project co-chair will be rotating off the SAB soon, and a new RCC project co-chair will need to be identified. The project Steering Committee has been formed, which includes representation from all three IJC advisory boards. On a related note, a journal manuscript has been submitted summarizing the two earlier phases of GLEWS.

Microplastics Monitoring & Risk Assessment (Karen Kidd)

The final project report was transmitted to governments in November, 2024. A public webinar was held on February 12, 2025 that was attended by 446 people. The project team also recently met with the Annex 3 core team to discuss the report, particularly its recommendation that microplastics be designated as a Chemical of Mutual Concern.

3. Future Work Plans

The GLRO Director offered remarks related to the dynamic environment that exists with the U.S. and Canadian federal governments, and their implications for Board activities. Recent Executive Orders have significant operational implications for IJC staffing and may have impacts on the Commission's ability to support some projects and initiatives. Because IJC is funded by equal moieties, funding implications for Board projects will become clearer once the current U.S. government spending Continuing Resolution expires in March 2025. Commissioners have been very actively communicating with legislators and their offices to advance IJC's interests.

The GLEWS Pilot Project is expected to be contracted in the coming weeks, but other previously approved Advisory Board projects are on hold for the time being. All Boards are encouraged to undertake activities that do not require contractor assistance and are also encouraged to fully develop new work plans for consideration by the Commission when the funding environment improves. The earliest that additional work plan funding might become available is autumn, 2025.

It was noted by Board members that universities are also impacted by several of the Executive Orders, and that several professional societies are actively working on single and joint statements to position aquatic sciences.

4. Strategic Items

Binational Priorities for Science

The agenda attachment describing the process to develop SAB advice in the Parties' draft Priorities for Science was reviewed.

Action: Members are requested to self-identify to provide input on their preferred Annex(es) by contacting matthew.child@ijc.org.

Triennial Assessment of Progress

Staff gave a presentation outlining the TAP 2026 report process, including the SAB's role in supporting the development of the report (see attached slide deck). SAB members have opportunities to contribute directly to framing the IJC evaluation of progress, and the priority topics that will be included in the TAP report.

Spring 2025 In-Person SAB Meeting

The next in-person SAB meeting is scheduled for April 14+15, 2025 in Niagara Falls, Ontario, and members have been sent meeting details as part of an Outlook calendar request.

Action: Members are requested to send April meeting agenda items to matthew.child@ijc.org.

Communications Activities

Communications staff provided a summary of the communications activities and products that have been associated with Board projects over the past five years. In order to gather input from SAB members, a survey link will be sent out in the coming days to solicit perspectives on what has been working well, and what more can be done to improve the reach of Board reports and impact of the Board's recommendations. It was suggested that the list of Board communication activities and products include conference presentations and refereed journal articles.

5. Other Business & Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:58 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*