

**SUMMARY OF THE
TNI
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

MAY 19, 2008

The Policy Committee of The NELAC Institute (TNI) met on May 19, 2008 at 11:30 AM (ET) by teleconference.

Chairperson Mr. Alfredo Sotomayor, of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, led the meeting. A list of committee members is given in Attachment A. A list of the action items generated during this meeting and of uncompleted ones generated during previous meetings is included in Attachment B. The meeting agenda is given in Attachment C.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND STATUS OF ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Sotomayor asked committee members to review the minutes of the last meeting and to forward any changes to him by May 23. He will then forward the minutes for posting on the TNI Website.

Mr. Sotomayor forwarded the standard operating procedures (SOPs) on Dispute Resolution and Standards Acceptance to the TNI Board of Directors for consideration at its May 20 meeting. He also will forward a set of SOPs from the PT Board, one SOP from the Laboratory Accreditation System Committee (LASC) on Standards Interpretation, and one SOP from the Advocacy Committee on the Committee's Operations in time for discussion at the next Policy Committee meeting on June 9, 2008.

Mr. Sotomayor provided the Policy Committee with a list of desirable attributes and principles of the role the committee would assume in conflict resolution for discussion at the May 19 meeting.

PROGRAM AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

The following programs had representatives who reported updates:

- **Technical Assistance (TA) Committee:** The committee has been discussing training requirements for assessors and training opportunities for the laboratory community. The "Small Laboratory Advocate" position has been posted on the TNI Website.
- **National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP):** The technical review of the renewal applications for accreditation bodies (ABs) has been completed, all on-site evaluations have been scheduled, and a few visits have already happened. The NELAP Board and the Proficiency Testing (PT) Board have been discussing additional PT acceptance limits. NELAP is also discussing its budget, collecting past decisions for re-approval, and how to evaluate field reagent blanks for EPA Methods 504.1 and 524.2.
- **Consensus Standards Development Program (CSDP):** The CSDP Board sent the final standard modules approved to the LASC and to the Website for posting. The Air

Proficiency Testing Committee has been formed. Marlene Moore was elected chair of the Field Activities Committee.

- The Website Committee has completed the site's revision and will be launching it in the very near future. The home page for the TA Committee is serving as a pilot.
- Bob Wyeth has resigned from the Advocacy Committee. He is now filling the "at-large" member position in the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee now needs a representative from the Advocacy Committee.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) FOR REVIEW

Mr. Sotomayor moved this agenda item for discussion earlier in the meeting. He briefed committee members on the SOPs and Policies which were pending to be reviewed by the committee and those to be sent to the TNI Board of Directors for endorsement. He agreed to forward the respective documents to the committee and the TNI Board by their next meetings.

CEU FOR ASSESSMENT FORUM

The committee received a proposal from the TA Committee to grant continuing education units (CEU) to assessors attending the Assessment Forum at TNI meetings and to use attendance at the forum as a mean to fulfill the requirement for assessors to attend annual refresher training. The Policy Committee circulated the document electronically and members were enthusiastic about it, but had questions about how the CEUs would be granted and whether the Forum's agenda would need to be approved by an AB before the AB would accept the CEUs granted.

The Policy Committee affirmed that ABs are fundamentally responsible for training their assessors and that they would retain the right to determine whether a particular Assessment Forum would qualify as annual refresher training. The committee however, also felt that asserting that the forum could serve as refresher training could make more assessors attend TNI meetings and would give ABs additional training options. Ms. Carol Schrenkel noted that if CEUs would be granted, they should be given to anyone completing the Assessment Forum session, not just assessors.

The Policy Committee concluded that the proposal was not in conflict with other TNI policies and procedures, and agreed to recommend its endorsement by the TNI Board of Directors.

EXPANDED ROLE OF POLICY COMMITTEE

The committee continued its discussion of the role the committee might play in conflict resolution. The committee reviewed a draft of desirable attributes and fundamental principles guiding the committee's involvement in resolving conflict. The draft explained that the committee would act as a clearinghouse, a deliverer of opinion, and at times, an arbitrator. The committee also would be mindful of the authority and autonomy of TNI programs and would avoid redundancies.

The committee suggested additional language changes. Mr. Steve Stubbs will forward additional suggestions for Mr. Sotomayor to incorporate. The committee agreed to present a final document for consideration by the TNI Board.

POSSIBLE CHANGES TO BYLAWS

Committee members reviewed once again the changes suggested at the committee's previous meeting on April 28, 2008. The committee agreed with the changes discussed at that meeting and with the following:

- The second paragraph of Article VI, Section 1 (A), National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP), now states that the "NELAP Board consists of one individual from each recognized Accreditation Body, appointed by the Accreditation Body". This change would allow NELAP to continue to operate as it does now as a committee of states, but would not prevent including a non-state AB in the future, should NELAP agree to it.
- The laboratory stakeholder group includes any laboratory and organizations involved in field sampling and measurement, regardless of their accreditation status.

The committee agreed that the TNI Board of Directors should consider favorably this version of the bylaws.

NEXT STEPS

Mr. Sotomayor will forward to the committee the next set of SOPs to review. The committee will meet again on June 9, 2008, by teleconference, at 11:30 (ET).

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM (ET).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS
TNI
POLICY COMMITTEE
MAY 19, 2008**

Member	Affiliation/Representing	Contact Information
Alfredo Sotomayor, Chair	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	T: 608-266-9257 E : Alfredo.Sotomayor@Wisconsin.gov
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	Proficiency Testing	
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	Consensus Standards Development	
Carol Schrenkel	Lionville Laboratory Inc.	T : 610-280-3013 E : schrenkc@lionvillelab.com
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POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 19, 2008**

ACTION ITEMS GENERATED AT THIS MEETING

Item No. Meeting Date	Action	Date to be Completed
1. 05/19/08	Mr. Sotomayor will forward to the Policy Committee a set of SOPs for endorsement	05/23/08

UNCOMPLETED ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item No. Meeting Date	Action	Date to be Completed
2. 01/31/07	Mr. Sotomayor will set priorities for developing policies and procedures needed by TNI.	02/28/07
3. 10/22/07	Mr. Parr will compile a graphic list of the Institute's logos and marks that would be covered by POL-103 for consideration by the TNI Board.	12/03/07
4. 10/22/07	The committee will complete drafts of a set of basic TNI administrative policies and SOPs.	04/04/08
1. 11/19/07	Mr. Sotomayor will forward examples of procedures describing appeal procedures for the committee to consider.	02/01/08
2. 03/03/08	The committee will discuss its annual report and work planning.	03/17/08

TNI
Policy Committee
May 19, 2008
11:30 AM – 12:55 PM (ET)

AGENDA

- 11:30 Attendance
- 11:35 Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Status of Action Items
- 11:40 Program and Committee Updates
- 11:45 CEU for Assessment Forum
- 11:50 Expanded Role of Policy Committee
- 12:15 Changes to Bylaws
- 12:30 SOPs for Review
- 12:50 Next Steps
- 12:55 Adjournment