



B·O·S·C

BOARD OF SCIENTIFIC COUNSELORS

August 25, 2010

Dr. Paul Anastas
Assistant Administrator
Office of Research and Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dr. Elaine Francis
National Program Director
Pesticides & Toxics Research Program
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Dr. Anastas and Dr. Francis:

This is a letter report from the Board of Scientific Counselors' (BOSC) Executive Committee concerning its July 12, 2010 review of the Office of Research and Development (ORD) Safe Pesticides/Safe Products (SP2) Research Program mid-cycle progress report. The Executive Committee conducted its review during the course of its July 12-13, 2010 meeting at the ORD National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory, Western Ecology Division, Corvallis, Oregon.

Under current BOSC program review policy, mid-cycle program reviews are conducted only in response to an ORD request or as recommended by the BOSC and ORD as a perceived need following Executive Committee review of a mid-cycle progress report. As part of this process, Dr. Francis presented the mid-cycle progress report at the BOSC's July 2010 face-to-face meeting. The Executive Committee is pleased to find excellent progress on the part of the SP2 Research Program and does not recommend a mid-cycle program review.

The SP2 Program has clear goals and measures that are being met. The Program identified three long-term goals (LTGs) in the 2007 program review conducted by the BOSC. That 2007 review offered the SP2 Program a series of 22 recommendations across these three LTGs and developed ratings for progress on each LTG at the time. Senior staff in the SP2 Research Program evaluated these recommendations and categorized them into several theme areas. In the mid-cycle report, these theme areas were described and the progress being made in each was discussed. Dr. Francis reported excellent progress in several areas, but indicated that prioritization of recommendations was necessary because of budgetary constraints evident during the ensuing 3-year period. The table on page 27 of the SP2 Research Program Mid-Cycle Progress

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Report lists each recommendation and describes the SP2 Program's updated response and the progress that has been made. Because of the proposed realignment of priorities associated with SP2 (see below), the BOSC has decided not to comment on the individual responses to the 2007 recommendations. The Executive Committee recognizes the fiscal constraints placed upon the SP2 Program during this period and the time spent focusing on realignment and consolidation of efforts. The BOSC was generally accepting of the progress made in each of these areas. There have been several changes in the SP2 Research Program since the 2007 BOSC program review. Since that time, the resources for LTG 3—Biotechnology Research Program have been either eliminated or reassigned to address higher priority Agency issues, leaving the program with two goals—LTG 1 and LTG 2. In addition, there has been a further realignment with SP2 and several other smaller programs being subsumed under a new research program called the Safer Products for a Sustainable World Research Program (SPSWRP). The BOSC Executive Committee concurs with this realignment of resources as EPA/ORD focuses its limited resources in a more efficient manner. To perform this realignment effectively, the SPSWRP is formulating new LTGs and a new Multi-Year Plan (MYP).

One main recommendation made in the 2007 BOSC program review suggested a clarification of how Annual Performance Goals (APGs) and Annual Performance Measures (APMs) can be reconciled more closely with the elements of the MYP. SP2 senior staff members have taken this recommendation very seriously and will implement a stronger tie among these goals and measures as they craft a new MYP and associated APGs and APMs for the combined SPSWRP in the upcoming year. Dr. Francis reported that SPSWRP will be fully operational by FY2012. This is an ambitious schedule, but one that should be doable and will be necessary to keep the required research programs operational.

In summary, the current SP2 Research Program is making concerted efforts to enact the recommendations made during the last program review keeping in mind the needs of the new SPSWRP. The Executive Committee finds that the program as originally configured is strong. It is hoped that the realignment and reorganization of this large and important program will improve communication throughout all parts of the Agency, including communication with the regions.

The BOSC is pleased to submit this report on the progress made toward the recommendations from the last full SP2 program review. The BOSC also would be pleased to work with ORD senior staff in developing the new SPSWRP. The Executive Committee is open to early review of the new program and is willing to offer its support in developing the MYP, APGs, and APMs needed to make this new program thrive.

Sincerely,



Gary S. Sayler
Chair, BOSC