

SBTi Scientific Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Version 2.0

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1.0	Issue for use released at time of call for SAG applications.	1st November 2022
2.0	Issue for use released at time of call for re-convening SAG.	30th March 2023

INTRODUCTION

1. The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is a joint initiative by CDP, the United Nations Global Compact (UN Global Compact), the World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) in collaboration with the We Mean Business Coalition (WMB).
2. The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) is the leading standard setting and certification body driving decarbonization in the real economy in line with our global climate goals. The SBTi develops climate alignment standards, based on the best available science, and independently assesses targets from companies and financial institutions against these standards following publicly available protocols.
3. This document outlines the Terms of Reference of the SBTi Scientific Advisory Group (SAG).

SBTi GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

4. The SBTi will develop its technical resources through transparent and inclusive multi-stakeholder processes following the high-level governance structure described in this section. The SBTi will provide extensive opportunities for external feedback so that all outputs are subject to comprehensive and rigorous review. The SBTi will act as convening agent and project manager in this process.
5. The key bodies in SBTi's governance are described below:
 - Project Teams: These teams include staff employed by SBTi partner organizations and are accountable to the SBTi for project delivery.
 - Working Groups: These groups include SBTi staff, as well as additional experts employed by SBTi partner organizations that provide guidance and may contribute to deliverables for specific projects. Working Groups are optional, and whether a Working Group is necessary will depend on the nature of the project.
 - Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs): Project-specific multi-stakeholder bodies that provide input throughout the development of specific projects.
 - Technical Advisory Group (TAG): The TAG is an advisory body that provides expert advice to inform the development and revision of SBTi standards, methods, guidance and other technical outputs. TAG members have in-depth knowledge of climate change

- mitigation or expertise in science-based target setting. They bring diverse perspectives from business, academia, government, non-profit and multilateral organizations.
- Scientific Advisory Group (SAG): An advisory body comprising experts from the scientific community with specialized expertise in climate science and climate change mitigation. SAG members provide evidence-based advice to the SBTi Research Team to ensure the robustness of the principles, pathways and methods that underpin science-based target-setting.
 - Executive Leadership Team (ELT): The ELT makes day-to-day decisions and is responsible for designing and overseeing implementation of the initiative's overall strategy and providing guidance and quality control. The Chief Technical Officer oversees and is accountable for the SBTi's technical developments.
 - Technical Council: The technical decision-making body that reviews and approves, or provides recommendation of approval for SBTi standards, guidance and other relevant technical decisions.
 - Executive Board: The Executive Board approves SBTi strategy and work plan, approves SBTi protocols and the Terms of Reference for Technical Council, appoints and oversees Technical Council, and approves adoption of new standards and other major technical decisions following deliberation from Technical Council.
6. The SBTi's governance structure is detailed within the SBTi Governance Handbook (forthcoming) and more information can be found on the [Organizational Governance webpage](#) and [Technical Governance webpage](#).¹

ABOUT THE SBTI SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY GROUP

- 7. The SAG is a group of volunteer advisors with in-depth knowledge of climate change mitigation from a diversity of perspectives. It includes scientists from research institutions and academia with developing international reputation and expertise in their field.
- 8. The SAG contributes to the rigor and consistency of the SBTi's outputs. It provides expert advice and review throughout the development of science-driven evidence informing key technical resources for the corporate and financial sectors.

¹ Please note that the SBTi is in the process of strengthening and formalizing its governance structure, and it is therefore subject to change. The SAG will be informed of any updates to this document, or any other relevant changes.

COMPOSITION

9. SAG members have proven scientific expertise in one or more of the following areas:
 - Development and application of emission mitigation scenarios across multiple sectors and geographic scales
 - Carbon accounting and Life Cycle Analysis (LCA)
 - SBT method architecture, emissions allocation, and equity
 - Land-water-energy nexus modeling and applications in regional case studies (especially Southeast Asia and Latin America, which are priority regions to accelerate adoption of SBTs)
 - Carbon Dioxide Removal, specifically:
 - Techno-economic, potentials, and interactions of existing and novel CDR approaches
 - Trade-offs with ecosystems services and with other societal objectives
 - Governance issues
 - CDR scalability and innovation requirements
 - Climate financial scenarios and their interactions with IAMs pathways
 - Market-based instruments for low carbon technology deployment and scale-up

10. SAG members generally meet 2-3 of the following qualifications:
 - 7-10 years of research experience in a field related to integrated assessment modeling, environmental science, energy systems, or economics and social sciences
 - Proven track record in publishing scientific articles in one of the following knowledge domains:
 - Net Zero emission pathways at sector or economy-wide level
 - Land-water-energy nexus
 - Early technology assessment, including CDR
 - Justice and equity in energy systems decarbonization
 - Life cycle assessment and carbon accounting
 - Green finance and carbon markets
 - Participation in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reviews and review process.
 - Active membership of leading national and international working groups/coalitions relevant to one of the thematic areas indicated in section 9.

11. The composition of the SAG shall be gender equitable, reflect the viewpoints of different actors within the climate action ecosystem, and, where feasible, should be regionally balanced so that advice provided to the SBTi is inclusive and measured.

12. The following criteria as self-identified by the applicant will be applied when determining the composition of the group:
 - Gender diversity, using the 40:40:20 rule (40% female, 40% male and 20% flexible to any gender, including non-binary and other gender identities)
 - Regional diversity, aiming for 30% representation from the Global South.
13. The SBTi shall use its best endeavors to achieve balance and diversity, but the work of the SAG shall not be invalidated by its inability to achieve an optimum level of diversity.
14. SAG meetings may be attended by additional representatives from any of the SBTi's partner organizations (CDP, UN Global Compact, World Resources Institute, WWF and WMB) with prior consent from the SBTi.
15. Any consultancy providing support to the SBTi on development of technical resources may not be represented on the SAG as a member.

APPOINTMENT

16. The SBTi will hold an open call for applications to join the SAG every two years.
17. Applications will be assessed through an evaluation of relevant qualifications and the needs of the SBTi Technical Department.
18. In addition to meeting desired composition metrics above, the criteria below will be used to evaluate all SAG applications:
 - Proven leading expertise in at least one of the areas specified in this document
 - Communication skills: Effective oral and written communication skills are necessary. Communication skills also include the ability to listen to and consider the views of others with an open mind and without prejudice and discrimination.
 - Awareness of the climate action landscape: Members should understand the climate action landscape in which SBTi operates. This should include awareness of sustainability, climate mitigation, business and financial reporting issues that are relevant to the mission of the SBTi.
 - Ability to work in a collegial and collaborative atmosphere: Members should be able to show respect, tact, and consideration for one another's views and those of third parties.

- Integrity, objectivity, and discipline: The credibility of members should be demonstrated through their integrity and objectivity. This includes intellectual integrity as well as integrity in dealing with fellow members of the SAG and others.
 - Commitment to the SBTi's mission and public interest: Members should be committed to achieving the objective of the SBTi to drive ambitious climate action in the private sector. Members should also be committed to serving the public interest.
19. SAG members serve in their individual capacity as experts, and therefore changes of members are discouraged and ad hoc alternatives will only be considered in rare instances.
20. Members of the SAG are appointed for a term of two years and can apply to retain their position for up to a maximum of 6 continuous years (or longer determined on a case-by-case basis through approval from the Technical Council).
21. The SBTi retains the right to terminate membership of any SAG member.
22. The following measures will apply in relation to changes to or termination of membership:
- SAG members will inform the SBTi of changes to their professional affiliation during their commitment period. In this situation, the SBTi will reevaluate continued involvement of the member and whether the member should be replaced by another expert from the original organization in the SAG.
 - SAG members will inform the SBTi if they would like to terminate their membership before the commitment period expires. The member will be removed from SBTi communications and should be replaced by a new expert.
 - If a consultancy begins providing support to the SBTi, any SAG member from that organization will be removed from the SAG and should be replaced by a new expert.
 - If a SAG member joins the SBTi as an employee they will be removed from the SAG and should be replaced by a new expert.
23. The SBTi may supplement the SAG with additional members at any time.

COMMITMENT

24. Members of the SAG are expected to donate a small fraction of their time, limited to 10 days per year in total.
25. In general, members are expected to:
 - Actively participate and share their expertise
 - Dedicate the necessary time offline to review and contribute to drafts and outputs presented by SBTi research team
 - Provide inputs in a constructive spirit, namely in improving clarity and scientific or technical accuracy
 - Optionally participate in activities intended to promote the adoption of science-based targets, amplify development processes and final deliverables of technical resources, and occasionally speak on the SBTi's behalf when opportunities arise
 - Optionally participate in virtual and in-person events (e.g., launch events, etc.)
26. Commitment for general SAG activities:
 - Quarterly virtual meetings (60-120 minutes each)
 - Potential ad-hoc meetings
 - Estimated commitment of 2 to 3 days per year
27. The SBTi will endeavor to arrange meetings with sufficient notice and hold meetings at a reasonable time of day so that as many members are able to attend as possible. The SBTi may repeat meetings to accommodate a wide range of time zones.
28. Members that are unable to make SAG meetings should inform the SBTi in advance. Members found to repeatedly miss meetings may be terminated, based on a three strikes policy.
29. Meetings shall be conducted under the Chatham House Rule. Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.
30. Members shall not distribute materials in advance of publication without the permission of the SBTi. Members agree to treat as confidential any information provided in the course of participating the SAG which is (i) marked as confidential or (ii) ought reasonably to be treated as such.

31. Members shall not engage in any discussion, activity or conduct that may infringe on any local or international antitrust or competition law. For example, the following shall not be discussed during any meeting of the SAG:
- Current or future prices, pricing strategies, or price related information
 - Output, capacity, inventory levels, or costs
 - Data related to market share
 - Current or future marketing strategies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND REMUNERATION

32. Members of the SAG will be acknowledged by name and organizational affiliation on the SBTi website and in any relevant publications.
33. SAG members must consent to the use of their organization name in relation to the SAG, but not for any additional purpose.
34. Funding provided by SAG members or their affiliated organizations does not confer any special status in the SAG or project governance.
35. The organizations and SBTi (together the “participants”) will use the following language when referring to participation in the initiative and will not portray or imply any other association or collaboration between the participants:
- “[*Organization name*] participates in the Scientific Advisory Group of the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) contributing to the development of [on-going technical project(s)]. The Scientific Advisory Group has an advisory role, and decisions on final technical resources will be made by the Technical Council or the Executive Board of the Science Based Targets initiative.”
36. Being a member of the SAG is a voluntary, part-time position and SAG members do not receive any financial remuneration.
37. For those participating in in-person workshops, travel costs must be covered by the SAG members’ own organizational budget.

DECISION-MAKING

38. The SBTi Technical Department retains the authority to make decisions to advance development of technical resources.
39. General input, advice, agreement and contentious issues shall be recorded, and main opposing views and rationales noted. If issues cannot be resolved within the SAG, the Project Team will consult within the Technical Department to propose a way forward, recording the pros and cons of the proposal as well as alternatives proposed.
40. The decision over and approval of final decisions and deliverables rests solely with the SBTi's Technical Council or the Executive Board.