

# Quick update: Revisions to the BMP Expert Panel Protocols

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# Updated Timeline of Review/Comment Period

- December 13, 2021: Presentation of proposed revisions to the WQGIT
- January 11 – February 8, 2022: First round of review
- March 28, 2022: Presentation to the WQGIT of additional revisions and responses to comments from first round of review
- April 5 – May 13, 2022: Second round of review
- May 24, 2022: Presentation to the WQGIT of final revisions and responses to comments from second round of review
- May 25 – June 17, 2022: Final, fatal flaw review
- June 27, July 25, 2022: Seeking WQGIT approval of revisions

# Latest comments

Some additional helpful comments were received and we need a little more time to make some changes—

- PA DEP
  - Shared some questions and comments, identified some clarifying improvements we can make
- STAC
  - Concerns about the current language on “consensus” and the use of the typical consensus continuum
  - Input on the latest text for “independent review process for scientific findings” section

# From STAC re: consensus

- Concern that the “ask” of panelists as written in the current revised protocol was not clear and the usual consensus continuum is not well-suited to that context.
- Specific revised language TBD, and STAC members may still have more examples to share.
  - Here is a current working definition of consensus with respect to the panel members’ consensus to release the report for review:  
*“Before a draft report can enter review, each member of the panel must agree that the draft report is ready. A panel member’s sign-off indicates that he or she believes the report reflects the consensus views of the panel—not necessarily that it is the exact report he or she would have written individually.”*

# From STAC re: independent review of scientific findings section

- Some confusion over the goals and form of the review and how STAC is expected to conduct it
- Overview of changes to come [specific changes TBD]:
  - The WQGIT's BMP Protocol will outline the goal/objective of the review
    - The review by STAC will be "process-based" and focus on what's in the report in response to specific prompts. The reviewers won't be asked for deep dives or separate analysis of their own. They will assess only what's presented in the report.
    - For example, here are some suggested prompts for reviewers, who will be asked to assess whether a panel's report of scientific findings:
      - fully addresses the approved scope of work without exceeding it;
      - contains only statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations supported by the evidence and arguments presented in the report;
      - treats sensitive policy issues with appropriate care;
      - maintains an impartial tone; and
      - is effectively organized and well written.
    - A small group (probably 3) STAC members will act as a "monitor" or arbiter between the independent reviewers and the panel; they will be positioned to evaluate if the panel's responses/revisions reasonably satisfy the reviewers' concerns
  - STAC will formulate a document to determine the details of the review process and they will have ability to revise/update that process as needed

# Questions?

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