

# Consensus Statements and Action Items

## Winter 2026 SODCO Advisory Board Meeting

### Consensus Statements

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-1:** The SODCO Advisory Board (SAB) supports the goals, objectives, and priorities of U.S. Scientific Ocean Drilling as outlined in a variety of recent planning documents and reports (e.g., [2050 Science Framework](#), [FOCUS report](#), [2025 FUTURE report](#), [2024 National Academies Consensus Study Report on Progress and Priorities in Ocean Drilling](#), and other recent ocean-focused NASEM reports). The SAB will assist NSF SODCO in remaining attuned to input from the U.S. science community while addressing these goals and objectives.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-2:** The SAB endorses the inclusion of representatives from additional scientific communities (e.g., the U.S. Continental Scientific Drilling and International Center for Deep Life Investigations) at future Scientific Drilling Forum meetings.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-3:** The SAB recommends that the SODCO Safety and Evaluation Panel (SSEP) include an evaluation of whether proposed scientific ocean drilling sites are in the right location and to the right depth to accomplish the expedition objectives in addition to evaluating any safety or environmental concerns.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-4:** The SAB recommends delaying formation of the SODCO Engineering and Technical Advisory Committee to allow for discussions on the roles and responsibilities of this committee. The SAB highlights the importance of continuing to take advantage of ongoing technologic advances during planning and implementation of expeditions, and in awarding Innovation Grants.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-5:** The SAB greatly appreciates the explanation of the Gulf Coast Repository preparations for onshore science parties and supporting offshore scientific measurements, as well as the tour of the facilities and laboratories.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-6:** The SAB strongly endorses the NSF SODCO plan to have an expedition planning meeting at the Gulf Coast Repository that includes discussion of expedition specific core flow and measurement plans with the chief scientist(s).

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-7:** The SAB recommends that the *Scientific Ocean Drilling Programs Sample, Data, and Obligations Policy* document managed by the Scientific Ocean Drilling Core Repository Curators be modified to clarify that legacy cores being used by IODP<sup>3</sup> SPARCs (Scientific Projects using Ocean Drilling Archives), NSF U.S. Sub-Seafloor Sampling Program (S3P) Legacy Asset Projects, or other large legacy asset-focused projects are not under moratorium during these activities.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-8:** The SAB recommends that the United States scientific ocean drilling and drilling-related activities be simply referred to as “U.S. Scientific Ocean Drilling” or US SciOD.

**Definition 1:** US SciOD encompasses all U.S. scientific ocean drilling and drilling-related activities around the globe. The NSF Scientific Ocean Drilling Coordination Office (NSF SODCO) and the Gulf Coast Repository (GCR) are the primary U.S. managers of scientific ocean drilling activities and are funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation. These entities are advised by the community through the SODCO Advisory Board and GCR Advisory Board.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-9:** The SAB recommends continued use of the LIMS database for data management during the onshore science phase(s) of SODCO implemented expeditions.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-10:** The SAB Staffing Subcommittee will initially provide staffing evaluations and recommendations for SPARC expeditions following the IODP<sup>3</sup> guidelines. This subcommittee will also develop policies and procedures for staffing evaluations and recommendations for future SODCO expeditions and legacy ocean drilling asset projects, to be discussed at the Summer 2026 SAB meeting.

**Subcommittee Members:** Allie Tessin, Trevor Williams, Bobbie John, Sean Gulick, Angela Slagle (SODCO)

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-11:** The SAB emphasizes the importance of a Community Staffing Model for broadening participation in scientific ocean drilling expeditions and ocean drilling legacy asset projects and for assembling robust science teams.

**Definition 2:** The Community Staffing Model includes the following components: 1) a SODCO generated open call for participation to the U.S. community, 2) SODCO Advisory Board evaluation of the submitted applications and recommendations for staffing that consider career level, expertise, quality of the application, and need to broaden the community, 3) SODCO and expedition chief scientists' selection of offshore, onshore, and supporting scientists based on the recommendations from the SODCO Advisory Board.

Broader impacts of a Community Staffing Model are increased and wider representation of the U.S. scientific community in scientific ocean drilling, ensuring a pipeline of scientists at all career levels with inherent mentorship and hands-on training across the disciplines.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-12:** The SAB recommends that 50% or more of a U.S. Scientific Ocean Drilling expedition or ocean drilling legacy asset project be staffed following the Community Staffing Model.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-13:** The SAB recommends that NSF U.S. Sub-Seafloor Sampling Program proposals identify both the scientific expertise of the PIs and the additional science staffing expertise required to accomplish their proposed expedition objectives.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-14:** The SAB recommends that PIs on NSF U.S. Sub-Seafloor Sampling Program proposals be part of the Expedition Science Team.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-15:** The SAB recommends that NSF U.S. Sub-Seafloor Sampling Program PIs that propose drilling in international exclusive economic zone(s) and extended continental shelves consider establishing collaborations with appropriate scientists from the country/countries involved while developing their proposals.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-16:** The SAB recommends ocean drilling legacy asset proposal PIs work with the Scientific Ocean Drilling Core Repositories to demonstrate the feasibility of successfully meeting their project research objectives using available legacy resources.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-17:** The SAB Workshops Subcommittee will evaluate and recommend action on workshop proposals submitted to SODCO.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-18:** The SAB Science and Technology Subcommittee will evaluate and recommend action on Pre-Drilling Activity and Innovation Grant proposals submitted to SODCO.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-19:** The SAB feels strongly that Schlanger Fellowships are a critical opportunity for the next generation of scientific ocean drilling scientists and proposes to evaluate Schlanger Fellowship applications to SODCO with input from the entire board. Further, the SAB recommends that the amount of funding per Schlanger Fellow be increased to reflect rising salary, tuition, and/or research costs.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-20:** The SAB will work with NSF SODCO to implement online working sessions designed to help U.S. PIs translate IODP proposals into competitive proposals to be submitted in the near future to the NSF U.S. Sub-Seafloor Sampling Program.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-21:** The SAB Science Communications Subcommittee will serve as a resource for the SODCO communications team to engage and expand the scientific ocean drilling community and public outreach.

**Consensus Statement 2026.03-22:** The SAB wholeheartedly thanks the TAMU Scientific Ocean Drilling department staff for their wonderful hospitality in College Station, Texas, and for making the meeting a pleasure to attend.

## Action Items

**Action Item 2026.03-1:** NSF SODCO and the SAB will identify a Chair for the SODCO Safety and Evaluation Panel (SSEP) and work with the SSEP Chair to invite panel members.

**Action Item 2026.03-2:** NSF SODCO and the GCR will continue to develop a database for offshore operations and data management plan (DMP), to be presented to the SAB at a future meeting.

**Action Item 2026.03-3:** The SAB forms a Sampling and Measurements Working Group to recommend a list of standard, ephemeral, and supplemental sampling and measurements guidelines for offshore and onshore operations in cooperation with the GCR, to be discussed at the Summer 2026 SAB meeting.

**Working Group Members:** Melody Lindsay, Justin Dodd, Steve Phillips, Rob Hatfield, Michelle Penkrot (GCR), Leah Levay (SODCO)

**Action Item 2026.03-4:** The SAB forms a Publications Policy Working Group to develop a plan for publications related to SODCO expeditions from the pre-expedition to post-expedition phases, to presented at the Summer 2026 SAB meeting.

**Working Group Members:** Larry Krissek, Kevin Johnson, Mitch Malone (SODCO)