POLICY GROUP

**SECRETARIAT REPORT ON MECHANICS AND FEASIBILITY OF
A CSLF INTERNET WEB LOG ("BLOG")**

Note by the Secretariat

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Background
At the meeting of the Policy Group in Berlin, Germany, on 27 September 2005, discussion of Public Outreach activities resulted in the proposal that the CSLF host a "blog" (i.e., an Internet web log) for use by CSLF stakeholders in expressing their views. The Policy Group requested that the Secretariat investigate the mechanics and feasibility of creating and hosting such a blog.

Actions Requested
The Policy Group is requested to discuss and consider the report of the Secretariat on the mechanics and feasibility of a CSLF Internet blog and provide guidance to the Secretariat.

Conclusions
The Policy Group is invited to note in the Minutes of its 3 April 2006 meeting that:

"The Policy Group discussed and considered the Secretariat's report on the Mechanics and Feasibility of a CSLF Internet Blog."

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The CSLF Policy Group has expressed an interest in facilitating greater involvement of the stakeholders and in fostering greater communications both among stakeholders, and between stakeholders and the CSLF. Establishing a blog as a communications tool for stakeholders to use to share ideas could possibly promote communications and openness.

What is a blog? How does it work?

A blog, short for a "web log", is a website that can be used to post new information and which can contain comments and discussion about a particular topic or topics. Users can create new topics for discussion and everyone is open to post comments. All the comments are listed on the blog and are open to all to read. Blogs can be written by an individual or a group of contributors.

Those wishing to participate in the blog would need to visit the site to register for a free user name and password. The owner of a user name would be known only to the person who set up the blog or to the person he or she has designated as the administrator. Once registered, a person may begin a new "thread" (i.e., start a new discussion topic) or reply to the threads and associated comments of others. Use of actual names and organizations is suggested so that readers would know the source of the comments.

The blog administrator can remove comments and/or users who do not conduct themselves in a professional manner or whose comments are not related to the CSLF or carbon sequestration. Likewise, the administrator would be able to moderate comments as a safety precaution against offensive language and "spam" by putting them into a "hold" folder until reviewed and approved. If the administrator did not elect to moderate comments, then they would be posted in real time. It would also be possible for the administrator to only grant permission to post comments to delegates and registered stakeholders.

Should the CSLF create a blog?

The fundamental issue that must be considered by the Policy Group is whether the CSLF should host a blog. The concept of a blog was proposed in the hope that it would stimulate interest in Carbon Capture and Storage and foster discussion and information exchange on issues related to it. A blog could possibly do that. Against this potential benefit, several factors should be considered:

- The success of a blog cannot be known until it has been on line.
- Administration may require removing some inappropriate postings and this may create controversy
- Terminating the blog could be highly visible and, in itself, controversial.

Some of this might be avoided by keeping the blog's clearly-stated topic focused on purely technical matters, but this might limit the usefulness of the blog.

The Secretariat recommends that the Policy Group carefully consider whether to have a blog and whether to limit it to technical issues. If a decision is made to implement a blog, the Secretariat further suggests that this be done on a publicly-announced "pilot" or "test' basis for a period of six to nine months. At the end of this pilot basis, the Policy Group should review its experience with the blog and decide whether to keep or terminate it.

Implementation

If the Policy Group decides to set up a blog, the Secretariat will set up a self-hosted blog on the CSLF Web site using commercially available software. The Secretariat would purchase or license commercially available software and modify it to function on the CSLF Web site.

Hosting the blog on the CSLF Web site requires that the Secretariat comply with the laws of the United States concerning privacy and cyber-security. Privacy laws in the United States require federal agencies which are collecting data on people — a blog does this — to comply with U.S. law by submitting documents explaining the reasons for the data collection and a risk analysis in the event that the information on the blog were to be released. A cyber-security review of the blog program would also be required to make sure that installing the blog software would not create an opening into the U.S. Department of Energy computer system through which hackers could enter secure systems. This implementation might require a period of several months.