



CSLF-P-2006-08
22 February 2006

POLICY GROUP

SECRETARIAT REPORT ON WEBSITE LINKS

Note by the Secretariat

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Background

In response to the recommendations of the Public Outreach Task Force, the Secretariat is working to expand the CSLF website by including links to other websites pertaining to carbon sequestration. This report sets out possible criteria and procedures for any proposed link before it can be accepted for inclusion in the CSLF website.

Actions Requested

The Policy Group is requested to discuss and consider the Secretariat Report on Website Links and to provide guidance to the Secretariat on this issue.

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 Report on Website Links.”



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The Secretariat has received requests by third party organizations unaffiliated with the CSLF to put links to their websites in the CSLF website. Currently, the CSLF does not have policies and procedures to address this matter. This raises several issues that the Policy Group should consider.

Discussion

Up to the present time, the Secretariat has asked the delegations of each country to volunteer sites for inclusion on the “Links” web page. These have mostly been government sites, some government/private partnerships, and universities and research institutions. There are also links to CSLF sponsored projects, and to some multinational agencies such as the International Energy Agency (IEA). Generally, if a delegation asks for a link to be posted, the Secretariat posts it.

In addition to links requested by Members, the Secretariat, early in the development of the website, incorporated links that it thought appropriate for the site, for example to various relevant publications

As noted in the Secretariat Report on Public Communication and Outreach Activities (document CSLF-P-2006-04), that the Public Outreach Task Force recommended that the CSLF website become a repository of information on carbon capture and storage. The Secretariat, in its response to this recommendation, suggested that annotated links to relevant websites selected by the Secretariat be used instead. (An “annotated link” is a link for which there is a short description of the contents of the site associated with the link. The annotation provides information on what expect that the link will contain.) The links would be selected by the Secretariat based upon its own analysis and suggestions from the Members. They would be in a separate section for links where the Secretariat will have verified that the substantive content of the website was adequate.

Requests from unaffiliated organizations raise a number of questions:

1. How should external requests for links be handled?
2. How should the issue of commercial links be handled?
3. How should the CSLF protect itself against potential liabilities arising from the links?

Recommendations

The Secretariat makes the following recommendations:

How should external requests for links be handled?

The Secretariat recommends that only links requested by CSLF Members or selected by the Secretariat for the “repository of information” be accepted and posted. If the CSLF accepts requests from some third parties but not others, it risks being seen as favoring those parties. Although the CSLF wants to encourage the involvement of stakeholders, the best course would be for the CSLF to adopt a policy whereby all third-party requests for posting a link to the CSLF website are accepted if it meets the criteria for the repository section.

How should the issue of commercial links be handled?

The CSLF should not promote particular organizations, companies, individuals, or technologies. However, the CSLF should not exclude such private sector or non-governmental organizations as corporate commercial interests or environmental policy activist groups provided their site pertains to carbon sequestration and is primarily informational in nature rather than promotional or ideological.

How should the CSLF protect itself against liabilities arising from the hyperlinks?

The CSLF should adopt and prominently post on its website a legal disclaimer statement such as the following, which is modeled in large part on that of the International Energy Agency Website. This disclaimer has been reviewed and approved by U.S. Department of Energy lawyers .

Disclaimer

1. The information on this website is posted by the Carbon Sequestration Leadership Forum (CSLF) as a service to the global carbon sequestration community. The CSLF makes every attempt to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information at the time of posting; however, the CSLF does not warrant or guarantee its accuracy, completeness, or currency. The CSLF cannot be held liable for any inaccuracy, error, or omission. The CSLF disclaims all liability for any loss or damage to any visitor whether or not due to reliance by that party on the information contained on this website.
2. The CSLF does not control any external website and is therefore not responsible for the content of any linked website or any link contained in a linked website. The CSLF provides such links (known as “hyperlinks”) only as a convenience to indicate that further information is available on related topics, and the inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement, investigation, or verification by the CSLF of the linked website or information contained therein. The mention of specific companies or products does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by the CSLF in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. A link to the CSLF website from an external website may not be used for the promotion of an organization, company, or individual; or of any commercial products or services.
3. Because the Internet is not a fully secure medium, confidentiality and privacy cannot be ensured. The CSLF will not be liable for any damages resulting from the inadvertent transmission of confidential or personal information.