



Professional Biology Advocacy Policy

The following is the policy on advocacy for the Association of Professional Biology (APB). The intent of this policy is to establish the criteria and define the process to be followed when the APB engages in advocacy. While there may be many issues and opportunities of interest to individual members, the APB will restrict its direct advocacy to activities consistent with the Association's mission and purposes.

1.1 Contact Information

Association of Professional Biology
300-1095 McKenzie Ave, Victoria, BC V8P 2L5
info@professionalbiology.com
www.professionalbiology.com

The contact for advocacy issues is the APB President.

1.2 Mission Statement of the APB

Our mission is to assist biology professionals to:

- Encourage the development and application of sound biological principles in the management and conservation of resources;
- Assist Biology Professionals in the development and maintenance of high professional standards in management, research and education related to biological resources;
- Inform and advise industry, governments and the public of the potential impacts on biological resources of land use and resource development proposals;
- Promote liaison with other professional associations for mutual professional development; and
- Engage in such other activities as are complementary to the purposes of the Association.

1.3 Definition of Advocacy applicable to activities of the APB

Advocacy is generally defined as the act of speaking or arguing in favour of something. In this policy, advocacy is applicable to two distinct types of activities listed below.

1. **Advocacy for Science-based Approaches** – Advocacy that highlights the science relevant to a particular decision or issue. Science-Based Advocacy helps others to understand relevant science and research recognizing the range of views held by members. Where science findings are clear and compelling, the APB may advocate for a particular position or decision.



- 2. Advocacy for Biology Professionals** – Advocacy that promotes the use of biology professionals in the practice of applied/professional biology. Where the provincial legislation requires and/or references practices related to applied biology, the APB will advocate for the service to be undertaken by qualified biology professionals. This type of advocacy would potentially include recommending actions, consistent with the Association's purpose and mission. For example, if government proposed to repeal the College of Applied Biology Act, the APB would likely advocate against this action providing alternate approaches, in consultation with APB members.

1.4 Rationale for advocacy

Engaging in Advocacy for Biology Professionals is consistent with the second bullet in our mission statement (*'Assist Biology Professionals in the development and maintenance of high professional standards in management, research and education related to biological resources'*). The APB recognizes that the College of Applied Biology maintains high professional standards relative to the law, policy and practice of applied biology. Advocating for applied biology services to be undertaken by qualified biology professionals is appropriate since the APB is the organization representing biology professionals.

Engaging in Advocacy for Science-based Approaches is also consistent with the second bullet of our mission statement. We are well placed to provide appropriate information sources to guide decisions. Our members have expertise that can be used to assist decision makers in understanding the science relevant to their decisions. However, since our members hold a broad spectrum of opinions on issues, our advocacy is centered on the science, more than the variety of options to resolve the issue.

Generally, in practicing advocacy, we avoid compromising other activities that are part of our mission and purposes. This is a balancing act. We seek to protect relationships with decision-makers, government and industry, while representing the views of the membership and remaining consistent with our professional standards.

1.5 Commitment to address ethical values

As professionals, codes of ethics and morals both influence APB members in the actions they take related to advocacy. For example, members of the College of Applied Biology (British Columbia) are bound by a code of ethics as are members of the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists. As in all activities, APB members acting on behalf of the Association must remain consistent with the applicable code.



1.6 Criteria for advocacy

These criteria will help guide choices by the APB in determining whether or not to engage in advocacy. The APB is willing to engage in advocacy if most of the following criteria are met:

- Participation by the APB will be consistent with its mission and purposes.
- There is reasonable potential for the APB to make a difference by participating in the proposed advocacy activity.
- Current, balanced, scientific information is available to form the basis for advocacy materials.
- Where time allows, the APB has explored possibilities for acting jointly with other concerned organizations.
- Administration resources and funding to pursue the proposed advocacy efforts are available and the importance/urgency of the issue (compared to other issues) warrants undertaking the proposed advocacy activity.
- Advocacy actions are likely to be broadly supported by APB members and activities will be designed to avoid internal controversy and divisions among members.
- Efforts can be completed in a timely manner with the support of qualified people to complete the work.
- Advocacy activities will be designed to avoid negative impacts and if possible enhance the APB's reputation as a reliable source of scientific information on natural resources.
- Presentations will be objective, professionally sound and respectful of alternate views. ***Professionally sound*** means well-researched, peer reviewed science.
- Advocacy activities can occur where members live and work, but focus on Canada. Advocacy activities involving areas outside Canada may occur given appropriately strong rationale (e.g. species and ecosystems that occur in Alberta/British Columbia also depend on areas outside these borders.)
- Advocacy activities will support the stewardship of ecosystems and biological resources.

1.7 Decision Process

Any APB member can propose an issue or topic to be addressed as part of advocacy activities. If the committee determines that the issue is generally consistent with the criteria listed above, activities can proceed under the guidance of the Legislation and Policy Committee Chair.



1.8 Advocacy Activities

Advocacy activities may include:

- sending a letter with a request for action or response;
- drafting and sending a resolution;
- preparing a position paper, legislative briefing paper, or policy paper;
- writing press releases or holding news conferences;
- recommending, participating in and/or holding an educational forum;
- writing information pieces in newspapers or other publications; or
- meeting with key decision makers.

1.9 Transparency

Members interested in learning more about advocacy activities of the APB can refer both to previous annual reports and the website <https://professionalbiology.com/publications/your-apb-voice> . Whenever time allows, members are offered the opportunity to participate in individual advocacy projects via BioServe postings and volunteers are welcome to join the Legislation and Policy Committee to participate more broadly and collaborate with other professional associations, where opportunities arise.