

SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (SCB) AFRICA SECTION

Guidelines on preparing Policy statements, submissions and approval process

1. Background

- a) The primary objective of the Society for Conservation Biology African Section (SCBA) is to provide a platform to promote the science and practice of biodiversity conservation across the continent to researchers, policymakers, businesses and the public.
- b) Recognizing the role of governance in the conservation of African biodiversity, policy briefs and statements are some of the means of strengthening science-policy interface and contributing to the decision-making process that can impact biodiversity conservation in the continent.
- c) These guidelines outline the framework regarding policy instruments available to SCBA members and the Chapters geographically nested in the continent on issues that may affect the conservation of biodiversity in Africa.
- d) These guidelines set out SCBA policy submission and approval procedure which aligns with the SCB Global formal policy approval process adopted by the SCB Board of Governors in December 2013 and amended in March 2014, and October 2015.

2. Statement preparation process

2.1 Initiation of statements and issues identification

- a) Any SCB member, Working Group, Sub-committee, Committee, Chapter, or Section can initiate a policy statement.
- b) Policy statements that would be considered and reviewed by the SCB Africa Section Policy Committee (hereafter, the Committee) must address conservation issues ranging from local, sub-national, national, regional to continent-wide biodiversity issues. Policy statements with global coverage can be submitted to the Section Policy Committee for onward delivery to the SCB Global Policy Committee or submitted directly to the SCB Global Policy Committee.

2.2 Drafting a (joint or individual) policy statement

- a) An SCB member, Chapter, or Section can work with other conservation or science-related non-governmental organisations to jointly prepare policy statements where mutual issues on biodiversity conservation are identified. Regardless of the policy framework in

the other organisations, such a policy statement will follow the steps in these guidelines for approval and circulation.

3. Policy submission

3.1 Submission of policy statement draft

- a) Policy statements should be submitted to the Section Policy Committee, which shall initiate a review process on the submitted policy statement draft.

3.2 Policy statement draft review process

- a) The Committee Chair sends the policy statement to the Global Policy Committee for an initial check on content and geographical scope, among other criteria.
- b) If the Global Policy Committee determines that the geographical scope of the policy statement falls within the African continent, then the Section Policy Committee review process will be initiated.
- c) Up to three members of the Committee shall review the policy statement within 15 days, and submit their recommendation to the Committee Chair or his designee.
- d) The Committee may also invite non-Committee members to review the policy statement, as needed.
- e) Based on the recommendation of the reviewers, a decision would be reached on the policy statement draft, which would be formally communicated to the authors.
- f) Where a revision and resubmission are recommended, the authors will have 10 working days to implement the necessary corrections and submit a revised policy statement draft to the Committee.
- g) Where the Committee voted to reject the policy statement draft, the author(s) cannot re-submit it.

4. Policy statement approval

4.1 Approval of policy statement draft

- a) Where the Section Policy Committee is satisfied that the authors have made the appropriate and necessary corrections, the Committee shall vote for the final approval of the policy statement draft.
- b) Where the Committee approves the policy statement, it shall become an official statement of SCB Africa Section.

- c) Approved policy statement shall be signed by the policy statement authors, the Section Policy Committee Chair and the Section President.

4.2 *Publication and circulation of approved policy statement*

- a) The approved policy statement will be published on the SCB website.
- b) If it is a sign-on to a group letter, then the proponent will add the SCB Africa Section to the letter's list of signatories.

5. Amendments to the policy guideline

- a) These guidelines shall be reviewed by the Section Policy Committee and Section Board every three years.
- b) The Committee may seek input from SCB Africa Section members in the course of reviewing the guidelines.
- c) Such review shall be ratified by the Section Board and signed by the Section President to take effect.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Suggested content of policy statement draft

Prospective authors are welcome to follow this suggested structure or other formats for preparing their policy statements:

- a) Title
- b) Background to the problem (could also be named as Overview or Introduction)
- c) Position statement (highlighted in 3-5 clearly stated points)
- d) Recommendations
- e) List of authors
- f) Date of policy release
- g) Contact details of the corresponding author
- h) List of references

Appendix II. Best practices for writing policy statements

- a) An existing policy may be amended if there is a change in the circumstances for which the existing policy was released.
- b) Where necessary, policy statement author(s) should consult with appropriate stakeholders in the conservation community during the drafting of the policy statement.
- c) Draft statements should be brief and should not exceed five pages, excluding reference list.
- d) Policy statements are written for a general audience and made available to the public. Therefore, when drafting a statement, author(s) should use clear and unambiguous language, and short sentences. It is a good practice to avoid or minimize the use of technical jargon.
- e) After publication, the author(s), and the SCB Africa Section should disseminate the policy statements widely to reach a wider coverage and the target audience.

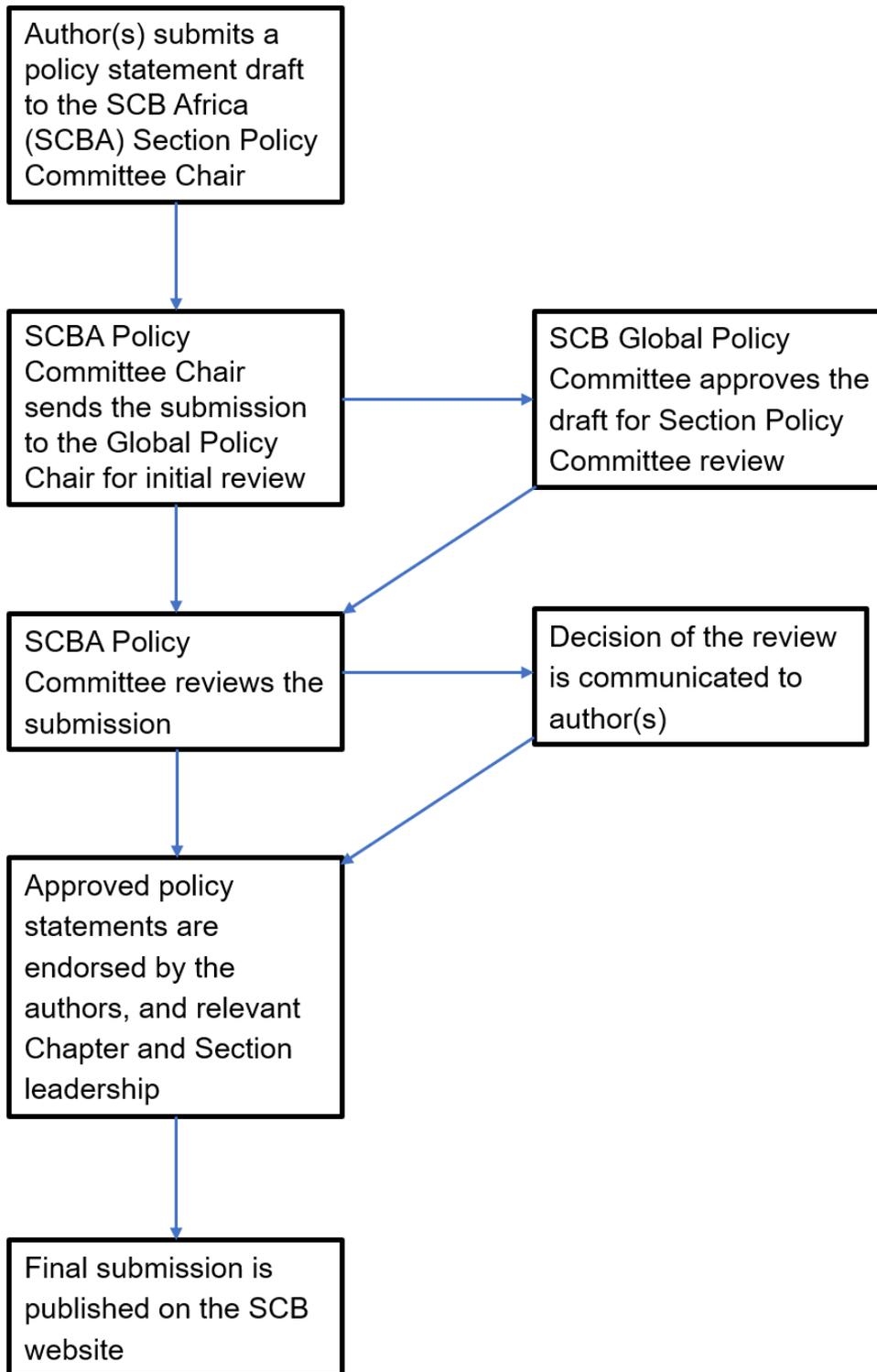


Figure 1. A flowchart illustrating the SCB Africa Section policy submission and approval process

This guideline was prepared by the SCB Africa Section Policy Committee, reviewed by the SCB Global Policy Committee, and ratified by the SCB Africa Section Board on April 9, 2021.



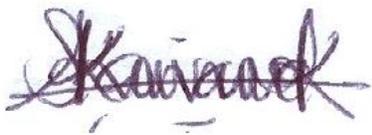
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