

# International Partnership for Blue Carbon Governance –Terms of Reference

## *Coordinating Group, Coordinator, Focal Groups, Partners and Observers*

The initial governance model and strategy of the Partnership was established at the Partnership's first workshop in Indonesia in August 2016. This model is contained in the Foundational Document and the Strategic Plan, both available on the Partnership's website. It was decided the Partnership's strategy, governance and activities will be reviewed on an annual basis and refined as necessary. At the Partnership's second annual workshop, in Abu Dhabi in July 2017, participants discussed the Partnership's governance. The following document outlines a ***refined model and processes for the Coordinating Group and Coordinator and associated bodies, including a Terms of Reference***. It reflects revisions of an earlier proposal circulated for comment by partners after the second annual workshop in the UAE.

### Coordinating Group

*Purpose:* The Coordinating Group is responsible for guiding the development and implementation of the strategic direction of the Partnership and the roadmap of activities.

*Membership:* The Coordinating Group will be composed of up to five members, with an effort to reflect the geographic and sectoral diversity of membership (for example, governments, non-government organisations and research institutions):

1. Government
2. Government
3. Government (or a regional organisation representing governments eg. SPREP)
4. Research institution
5. NGO

One of the members of the Coordinating Group will also serve as the Coordinator. The membership of the Coordinating Group is recorded on the Partnership's website.

*Term and nominations process:* Participants will be requested to serve for approximately one year. Nominations may see the same countries or organisations returned to the positions, or new countries and organisations introduced. Rotations will be encouraged. There is currently no limit to the number of terms.

*Decision processes:* Decisions will be made by the Coordinating Group rather than all Partners to streamline processes and increase the agility of the Partnership. Decisions may include governance and implementation of activities. As the Partnership evolves, this may also include budget and staffing decisions.

*Core duties:* The core duties of the Coordinating Group revolve around the strategic direction of the Partnership and activity implementation. These include:

- Providing advice on the Partnership's strategic direction, products and events;
- Contributing connections and networks to the Partnership; and
- Supporting the Coordinator.

The Coordinating Group may refer work to focal groups where more detailed or specialised work is desired or required.

*Additional duties:* The Coordinating Group, or members of the group, may also undertake other activities as required or based on their expertise and availability. Additional duties may include:

- Organising and developing particular events;

- Actively seeking opportunities to promote the Partnership and its work within networks;
- Contributing to planning of the annual workshop; and
- Sourcing expertise required by the Coordinating Group and Coordinator.

*Communication:* The Coordinating Group will participate in:

- bi-monthly calls
- ad hoc communication via email on as needs basis (particularly in lead up to events)

The Coordinator will facilitate the operation of the Coordinating Group.

## Coordinator

*Purpose:* The Coordinator will work closely with the Coordinating Group and be responsible for day-to-day management of the Partnership, including logistical support for Partnership activities and communication with Partners and other stakeholders.

*Membership:* As detailed in the Coordinating Group ToR, the Coordinator will be a member of the Coordinating Group. This will assist in communications and streamlining processes.

*Term and nominations process:* The Coordinating Group will nominate a Coordinator for agreement on a “no-objection” basis by Partners. The Coordinator will be requested to serve for two years. This term facilitates transitions over time through the Coordinating Group and other bodies, and facilitates the momentum of activities. A Partner may serve multiple terms as the Coordinator.

*Coordinating duties:* These are core duties that facilitate the operation of the Partnership, the Coordinating Group and the tracking of the Partnership.

- Managing strategic documents
  - o Tracking progress of Partnership activities
  - o Developing and update documents based on Coordinating Group and Partnership discussions
- Coordinating focal groups
  - o Organising teleconferences, providing secretariat function, providing linkages between groups
- Coordinating Group secretariat
  - o Setting agendas for meetings, providing minutes, ad hoc research and consultation
- Developing annual workshop
  - o Logistics, invites, agenda setting (in consultation with Coordinating Group and host)

*Communication duties:* These are key duties that can be undertaken by the Coordinator or managed by the Coordinator and undertaken by another party. For example, if in future the Partnership decides to source communications assistance or a Partner volunteers for these tasks.

- Maintenance of website
- Facilitating communication with Partners (more detail is being prepared on proposed communication going forward, including Partnership branding)
- Maintaining list of events

## Focal Groups

*Purpose:* Undertake policy discussions and support implementation of activities such as by providing expert technical guidance, or practical perspectives on policies and projects.

*Creation/dissolution:* The current three focal groups were established by the Coordinator, following consultations with Partners on topics, and are expected to run until approximately the end of 2017. At this time, their focus and work area will be reviewed by the Coordinating Group, in consultation with the focal groups. If a work stream has concluded, the focal group can be concluded or it can take up new issues. Partners will be consulted for new issues.

*Membership:* Focal groups are comprised of up to six members including one member from the Partnership's Coordinating Group. The groups will be representative – from different regions and backgrounds (expertise, policy makers and practitioners). The participants need not be members of the Partnership, particularly where there is relevant expertise outside the Partnership.

*Term and nominations process:* Involvement in the focal groups will be by invitation of the Coordinating Group to address the specific expertise and practical knowledge requirements for particular issues being considered by the focal groups. The Coordinating Group will seek advice from the Partnership in determining membership of the focal groups. Participants will be requested to serve for approximately six months, however, membership may evolve if additional expertise is required for a specific issue.

*Duties:* Participants can expect the following to serve as an outline of the work involved:

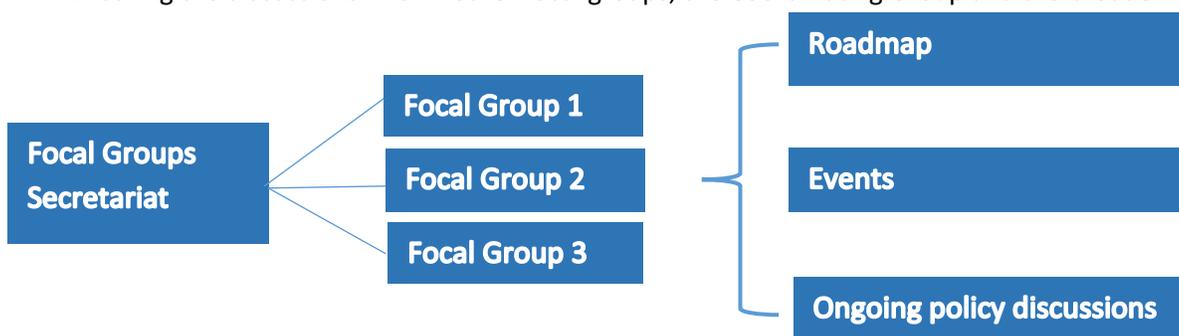
- Participate in teleconferences and online discussions;
- Provide expertise to inform policy discussions and consult with networks to support advice;
- Support agenda setting and the development of Partnership events where it relates to the group's expertise;
- Provide advice to develop activities identified by the Coordinating Group or in the roadmap; and
- Contribute to the development of products or projects identified under these activities as time and capacity permits.

*Communication:* Focal groups are expected to mostly meet on-line or via teleconference due to the global representation of groups. Face-to-face meetings can be arranged where participants are at the same meeting.

- Approximately one teleconference of about two hours will be organised every one to two months, depending on the demands of the work program and members availability.
- Emails will be used for issues that require quicker responses. Responses within two to three business days are preferred.

*Secretariat and duties:* A dedicated secretariat will be involved in each focal group. The secretariat personnel will be drawn from the Coordinating Group. Duties will include:

- Preparing and circulating an agenda and any relevant papers ahead of a teleconference;
- Chairing teleconferences;
- Reporting back on teleconferences with minutes and action items;
- Ensuring discussions relate to the Partnership's objective, pillars of work and the Focal Group's priorities; and
- Ensuring the discussions inform other focal groups, the Coordinating Group and the broader Partnership.



## Partners

*Purpose:* Partners are the core of the initiative and bring together different sectors interested in sharing experiences and accelerating action on the protection and restoration of the coastal blue carbon ecosystems. Partners contribute to the Partnership's pillars of work (building awareness, sharing knowledge and accelerating action) through their activities.

*Membership:* Membership will be from different regions and sectors. Sectors include governments, non-governmental organisations, intergovernmental organisations, regional organisations and research institutions. The Partnership does not currently include members from the private sector and will engage this sector where relevant through the Coordinating Group, focal groups and work programs. Organisations and countries seeking membership should have capacity to contribute actively to the Partnership. No funding for participation is available at this time.

*Term and nomination process:* Formal expressions of interest for the Partnership in the form of a letter can be emailed or posted to the Coordinator. The letter should include the following components:

- Authorisation from an appropriate representative of the country or organisation seeking to participate;
- Nomination of a contact point; and
- A summary of the country or organisation's work on issues relevant to blue carbon, primary thematic and geographic areas of focus, and potential contributions (see resources below) to the Partnership.

Participation letters will be shared with Partners and new members accepted on a "no objection" basis. More detailed guidance is available on the construction of this letter on the IPBC website.

*Duties:* Partners will be asked to contribute their expertise and experiences to the Partnership to help recognise barriers, address challenges and identify solutions, to accelerating the protection and restoration of coastal blue carbon ecosystems. Contributions of support (in-kind or financial) may be provided based on expertise and capacity. That are encouraged include:

- Providing advice and support on documents, activities and event development;
- Identifying opportunities for the Partnership or issues to address; and
- Sharing expertise and experiences in Partnership bodies and more broadly.

*Resources:* As outlined in the strategic plan, the Partnership is not a funding body and contributions are of a voluntary nature. The Partnership is developing a longer term funding strategy (to be distributed separately).

- Members will not be required to pay a joining or membership fee.
- Any contributions from Partners towards the operating costs of the Partnership will be voluntary in nature.
- Resourcing for additional tasks (e.g. communication products, workshops and conferences, side-events, studies and analysis) will be determined on a case-by-case basis and subject to the discretion of the coordinating group.

*Reporting:* Partners will be requested to complete an annual survey to contribute to the Partnership's progress tracking. This survey would ask Partners to report on their blue carbon activities over the past year, their contributions to the Partnership and the benefits they have gained through membership.

## Observers

*Purpose:* The Partnership is open and inclusive and aims to provide an enabling platform to share expertise and experiences. As such, many countries and organisations may participate in events and activities of the Partnership, without joining as a partner.

*Description:* Observers will be kept up-to-date on blue carbon and Partnership activities via communications products and events. Observers do not have an advisory function like the Partners and will not receive more targeted communications related to Partnership governance and strategic direction and prioritisation of activities.

## Model of Governance

