

CONSERVATION COACHES NETWORK (CCNet) CHARTER¹

Our Commitments to Each Other

FINAL: 12 October 2009

The purpose of this charter is to describe the agreement among the organizational partners, franchises and coaches of the Conservation Coaches Network (Network or CCNet). It describes how the Network functions and its role in supporting coaches around the world. It includes a statement of the mission and vision of the Network, outlines the core functions served by the Network, describes the expectations and benefits of being a partner or Network member, sets forth the conditions of different levels of membership in the Network, and describes how decisions are made. The agreements in this charter were mutually developed and freely adopted. While this charter is not legally binding, we see it as a social contract among Network members.

A. Background²

The Conservation Coaches Network originated with the Efroymsen Coaches Network, which was established in 2004 to support the application of Conservation Action Planning (CAP) to The Nature Conservancy's projects around the world. The Efroymsen Coaches Network made encouraging progress over its first four years, growing from a few individuals to over 230 trained coaches in 27 countries and 15 organizations. With the adoption of the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation by 12 international organizations, requests for support to implement Conservation Action Planning and comparable approaches grew during this same time period. This demand grew faster than the Network's capacity to respond. Given this need and opportunity, the Efroymsen Coaches Network, in partnership with Greening Australia (GA), Foundations of Success (FOS), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), developed a strategic plan to outline a specific course of action to respond to growing need and demand over a three-year period (2009-2012).

This strategic plan calls for an evolution of the Conservancy's Efroymsen Coaches Network to a "partnership-owned and operated" Network with a formalized, broad and organizationally diverse network of coaches and franchises working to advance effective conservation around the globe through the implementation of Conservation Action Planning and the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation (CAP/Open Standards).³ This charter is a product of these deliberations.

¹ With thanks to the Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) Network for allowing us to use their Agreement as a template for this Charter.

² Excerpted from Efroymsen Coaches Network Strategic Plan 2009-2012.

³ Web link to Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation: <http://www.conservationmeasures.org/CMP/Products.cfm>

B. Mission, Vision, and Goals of the CCNet⁴

The mission of the Conservation Coaches Network is:

To catalyze effective conservation across lands and waters worldwide through action planning, coaching, knowledge sharing, and innovation.

Our long-term goals to achieve this mission are:

1. Provide **coaching support** worldwide in the application of conservation action planning and the Open Standards for Practice of Conservation (CAP/Open Standards) to ensure that practitioners have the confidence to implement their plan of action and achieve tangible conservation results.
2. Ensure **continuous improvement** of CAP/Open Standards methodology based on the real experiences and input of users.
3. **Share** promising practices and lessons learned across the worldwide community of conservation practitioners.
4. Provide a **common language and framework for conservation decision making** across multiple scales and organizational program needs, and support decision makers to integrate the core components of the CAP/Open Standards framework as appropriate.
5. **Expand the Network** to include strong “franchises” (or coach groups) within key partner organizations around the world that actively support and promote CAP/Open Standards methods and tools as standard practice.

Our vision of success for the Network is:

By 2020, every conservation project that seeks support will have access to a trained Network coach who will help them plan, manage, monitor, and learn from their work;

CCNet will have active and engaged franchises around the world that are enhancing the skills, connectedness, and impact of its members;

Coaches will be recognized for their responsive and effective service and valued by their peers and organizations;

Through this Network's activity, conservation of lands and waters worldwide will be significantly and measurably improved.

⁴ Excerpted from Efrogmson Coaches Network Strategic Plan 2009-2012.

In reaching for these goals and vision, we believe in the following core values:

Results Oriented. We are committed to tangible conservation outcomes using and adapting the best known approaches to conservation project planning and management.

Inclusive and Diverse. We are committed to engaging many different organizations, partners, and practitioners to operate as a network of peers encouraging diverse ideas, multiple languages, and culturally sensitive and ecologically distinct adaptations and applications.

Innovation and Excellence. We are committed to encouraging new techniques and enhancements to ensure continual improvement, and integrating and being informed by the best available conservation science in every step of the process.

Distributed Responsibility and Non-Hierarchical. We will function as a network of peers assisting all to achieve their full potential as coaches while working in a cooperative and collaborative manner.

Culture of Cooperation. Our network is committed to sharing and learning in an open and supportive manner and will have a culture of acceptance, cooperation, honest and respectful exchange, and celebration in our work with each other and with our partners.

C. Network Membership

The Network is composed of the following types of members:

Coaches

The core focus of the Network is to recruit, train, support, inspire, and develop coaches who help teams use simple, powerful decision-making tools consistent with the Open Standards to develop focused and measurable action plans for their sites and projects. There are different levels and areas of expertise within the coaches' community. The classification and certification of coaches is underway with input from the franchise leaders and coaches.

Franchises

Franchises are groups of coaches that share a geographic area or other specialized interest that work together on a regular basis to assess needs, set priorities, and support planning.

Groups that wish to join the Network as a new franchise should contact the Network Coordinator to discuss the core requirements and develop a Franchise Agreement, if appropriate. The proposed franchise would be reviewed and approved by the Network Board. Active franchises will have decision-making rights in the Network (see below).

Partner Organizations

This Network was founded by four organizations:

- The Nature Conservancy (TNC),
- Greening Australia (GA),

- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF),
- Foundations of Success (FoS).

The Network will be open to like-minded organizations from around the world by 2010.

Network partners are organizations, agencies, and institutions that are committed to:

- implementing CAP/Open Standards within their organization,
- supporting coaches actively supporting the practice,
- working jointly with other partners to implement and periodically update the CCNet strategy,
- treat improvements and new practices in CAP/Open Standards as “open source” and
- signing onto this Charter.

Partners may also be coordinating and representing the work of multiple franchise units.

As described below under Network functions, partners will provide active leadership and support to strengthen and expand the Network. Together with the franchise leaders, partners will provide the governance and support structure to the Network. It is expected that the Network will include franchises and coaches from organizations that may not choose to be active partners.

Network Coordination Team

The Network Coordination Team (NCT) is composed of paid staff with significant programmatic responsibilities for Network activities. NCT members will most likely work for one or more of the partner organizations.

Network Board and Executive Committee

The Network Board will include all franchise leaders (or their designated representative) and one representative of each partner organization (each partner representative will have a designated alternate). It will identify an active Executive Committee to provide timely and efficient input and direction to the Network Coordination Team staff.

Each of these groups will agree on their own ground rules for working together, to achieve the Network functions described in the following section and Annex A.

D. Network Functions

Together, the Network members need to actively fulfill at least nine essential functions outlined in more detail in Annex A.

1. New franchise identification, recruitment and start-up.
2. Coach identification and training.
3. Coach placement and deployment.
4. Technical support and innovation.
5. Knowledge sharing.
6. Marketing, communications, and advocacy.

7. Funding and fundraising.
8. Network governance and strategic planning.
9. Monitoring and evaluation.

E. Network Member Expectations and Benefits

We agree that to be included within the Network, there are expectations that need to be met and benefits that should be experienced. Specific responsibilities across Network functions are outlined in Annex A. At a high level, however, expectations and benefits for each type of Network member are as follows.

Specific expectations of each **partner organization** include:

- **Provide leadership** – Partners will identify two representatives to actively engage in Network decisions, collaborate with other partners, and communicate Network priorities, opportunities, and needs to others in their organization.
- **Attend meetings** – Partners are expected to attend Executive Committee calls and Network meetings on a regular basis.
- **Do the work** – Partners are expected to engage in and help complete the work that the Network has designated for itself. This includes actively helping to implement the Network’s strategic plan (as appropriate within their organization’s priorities) and engaging franchises, NGOs, government agencies and others to achieve the Network goals and catalyze effective conservation.
- **Commit resources** – Partners are expected to provide resources for Network-related activities, including staff time, funding, and timely decision making as appropriate within their organization’s priorities. Partner organizations will include Network responsibilities in their programs and staff work plans and job descriptions, as appropriate and will cover the costs associated with their participation, including staff time and expenses.
- **Develop proposals** – When necessary, partner organizations will develop and promote individual or joint proposals to fund those activities that cannot be covered by the franchises and coaches.
- **Promote learning** – Partners will openly share ideas, experiences, improvements, new practices and other information.

Partner organization benefits include:

1. **Having a say in the course and direction of the Network** – Partner organizations’ representatives will participate in the Executive Committee and help set policy and determine what areas of interest to focus on based on input from the franchise leaders and/or coaches.
2. **Determine the activities undertaken** – Once policy is set, the members will decide what activities will be undertaken by the partners.
3. **Participation in all activities organized by the Network** – Current members will have the option to participate in all activities developed by the Network.

4. **Joint authorship of products** – When appropriate, products that are developed and published by the Network will be produced under joint authorship.

Specific expectations of each **franchise** are developed and documented in the Franchise Agreement. At minimum, each franchise will:

1. **Provide leadership** – Each franchise will have a leader (or co-leaders) to coordinate coaches in their franchise. The franchise leaders represent their coaches in decision-making for the Network.
2. **Implement Network activities** – Franchises will guide, recruit, and help train the coaches in their franchise and will provide coach support in CAP/Open Standards to teams every year.
3. **Franchise Agreement** – Each franchise will develop an agreement with the Network Coordinator to clarify and document the specific scope, expectations, benefits and resources for that franchise. These will be updated periodically.
4. **Report to the Network** – Active franchises must report to the Network on their activities at least annually.

Specific expectations of each **coach** are developed and documented in the Coach Job Description, which will be updated periodically. At minimum, all coaches will: commit to a minimum level of training; maintain currency with the methodology through some continued training-related activity; support at least one conservation team in the application of the method every year, or a comparable applied activity; and share lessons learned with the broader coach community. Coaches are strongly encouraged to participate in a franchise, but unaffiliated coaches are included in the Network.

The **Network Coordination Team (NCT)** works with the Network to:

1. **Plan the work** – Conceptualize and plan the overall work of the Network. This includes promoting the Network, raising funds, and maintaining relations with franchises, partners, projects, and all groups working with the Network.
2. **Provide coordination** – Coordinate specific Network activities including meetings, cross-site visits, and training sessions. The NCT will ensure communication among franchises, partners, coaches, and Network projects and act as a conduit for information within the Network. The NCT will also coordinate the development of a web site and other networking tools.
3. **Support decision-making, monitoring and reporting** – Help franchises and partners determine what data/information they need for decision-making purposes as well as for Network level analyses. The NCT will help coordinate the development of a common monitoring framework and will help franchises and partners collect and analyze data in a standardized fashion.
4. **Share lessons** – Communicate lessons within the Network, determine more general lessons learned and communicate results to outside audiences. Publications and other communication pieces will follow Network guidelines for authorship.

5. **Build the Network** – Assist Network members to recruit and orient new partners and franchises.

It is expected that the Network Coordination Team will include professional staff paid by one or more of the partner organizations.

Benefits to all Network members may include:

- Priority use of materials and products resulting from Network activities.
- Collaborating with other Network partners in achieving shared goals.
- Learning new ideas and techniques.
- Having access to comparable data from other organizations and projects.
- Receiving training and technical support for Network-related activities.
- Receiving regular advice, technical and educational support, and feedback from participating peers.
- Securing a stronger, collective voice in advancing the use of adaptive management processes by their organizations and others.
- Becoming part of a growing community of experts and coaches in the Open Standards/CAP.
- Expanding professional relationships.

F. Decision Making and Communication Procedures

All **Network decisions** will address Network functions only and will respect the autonomy and individual methodologies used by partner organizations. Where possible, all Network decisions will be made by consensus. Our ideal is “complete consensus”, defined as agreement and support of a decision by all partners (and/or other Network members) responsible for that decision. If we can’t achieve this, the following process will apply:

- If the decision is not urgent and more information will help parties resolve their differences, then a process to gain the necessary information in a specified time period will be initiated;
- If the decision is urgent, or it is considered that additional information will not change either party’s position, the decision will be decided by a super majority (2/3 vote).

The Executive Committee will select a Chair and Secretary to work with the NCT in convening and reporting on meetings. Major decisions will be tentative until all decision makers who did not participate have the opportunity to provide input (e.g., email notice with clear deadline for response). No response will be interpreted as approval.

Major **Board decisions** will generally be made at the Coaches Rally with all members represented. As needed, decisions can also be made during interim periods by using e-mail and other means of correspondence to solicit votes from each designated representative within a timely manner. At least three weeks will be allowed for questions requiring a Board vote. No response by the deadline will be interpreted as approval.

The **Network Coordination Team** can make decisions regarding any functions that:

- a) are consistent with the Network strategic plan
- b) do not exceed the budget agreed by the partners; and
- c) are consistent with pre-existing agreements on how a particular partner's funds are to be allocated.

Any new or existing initiatives that require funds additional to those budgeted need to be referred to the Executive Committee and partners, and a proposal for securing additional funds, or reallocating existing funds, must be developed and agreed to by all partners.

The following are minimum communications required to maintain the Network:

1. NCT reports to members on Network progress, major initiatives and issues at least annually; more often as needed.
2. The Executive Committee meets regularly, typically 2-4 times each year, to provide guidance and support to NCT in implementing the Network strategy and to report on and maintain organizations' commitments to the Network. A meeting can be called by the Network Coordinator or any Executive Committee member
3. The Coaches Rally is held every 18 - 24 months, unless the Executive Committee decides to postpone it or to convene the Network by other means.
4. Most meetings and communications will be electronic or virtual. Physical meetings will be arranged by mutual agreement. Participants will be expected to cover their own costs for calls and attending meetings, unless other arrangements are made.

G. Amendments, Withdrawal, or Removal from the Network

Amendments to this Charter can be made by consensus of the partners and franchise leaders. Any member can resign from the Network at any time. For partners and franchises, written notice should be given to all partners and to the Network Coordination Team to inform them of the decision to discontinue its membership in the Network. It is expected that partners will provide at least 90 days advance notice, if at all possible. Commitments to transfer funds or other resources to support the Network will be documented under separate agreements. Typically, any resources already received by the Network will be retained. A member leaving the Network has the right to remove all unpublished and project-specific data from the Network's database system. They do not, however, have the right to alter already completed analyses or publications that use the project's data.

It is our sincere hope that this Network will never be forced to remove a partner, franchise or coach against their will. In the unlikely event that this is necessary, however, any member can be removed from the Network for a serious breach of the promises made in this Charter. In the unlikely event that it becomes necessary to revoke the membership of any member, Executive Committee consensus or, if necessary, a vote of 2/3 of the Executive Committee (excluding the member in question) is required. The terms of this Charter will remain in force even after the membership has terminated, either through withdrawal or removal.


If any disputes arise between Network members relating to this Charter, the parties shall attempt to resolve the dispute through good faith discussions either by themselves or through the assistance of a mediator.

H. CCNet Charter Endorsement


This Charter to guide the joint development of the Conservation Coaches Network was reviewed and approved by the active franchise leaders in May 2009, and the final Charter will be sent to all franchise leaders after signing. This Charter shall be effective on the date of signature by the four founding partners and shall remain in effect until 31 December 2014. It may be renewed or extended by agreement of the active franchise leaders and partners at that time.


This Charter is a non-legally binding statement of the Network members' mutual understanding of their collaboration. It is not intended to create any legally enforceable rights or obligations in respect of any party.

The CCNet Charter is endorsed by the following partner organizations.


Peter Kareiva, Chief Scientist
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY (TNC) 10/26/09
Date


David Freudenberg, Director of Science & Major Projects
GREENING AUSTRALIA (GA) 12 Jan 2010
Date


Nick Salafsky, Co-Director
FOUNDATIONS OF SUCCESS (FOS) 2/10/10
Date


PJ Stephensen, Director for Conservation Strategy & Performance
WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF) 3-12-10
Date

ANNEX A. Proposed Functions for the Conservation Coaches Network

Functions are divided across the following Network members:

Franchises Can be defined by geography, organizations, topics, or other organizing principles. Franchises can be smaller, equal, or larger than one organization. Franchises include franchise leaders and coaches.

Partner Orgs Organizations such as TNC or Greening Australia that are official partners providing active leadership and support for the Network.

Board The official Board of the Network. Under the current charter, the Board is composed of the leader of each franchise (or their designated representative) and one representative of each partner organization. Each partner representative will have a designated alternate.

Exec Comm The Executive Committee of the Board is composed of one representative of each partner organization and several at large franchise leaders. This committee allows faster and more nimble consultation.

NCT The Network Coordination Team is composed of paid staff with significant programmatic responsibilities for Network activities. NCT members will most likely work for one or more of the partner organizations.

Work Groups Standing or ad hoc groups designed to take on specific tasks.

In the following table, we use the RACI system (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RACI_diagram) to assign tasks where:

R = Responsible for doing the work
 A = Accountable (Ac) and/or Approves (Ap) the work
 C = Consulted (two way communication)
 I = Informed (one way communication))

Key Functions	Franchises (leaders & coaches)	Partner Orgs	Full Board	Exec Comm	NCT	Work Groups
1. New Franchise Identification, Recruitment, and Start-up						
a. Develop standards for franchises	C		Ac/Ap	C	C	R
b. Nominate franchises	R	R			R	
c. Assist with start-up of new franchise	R				R	
d. Certify / accredit franchises	C	C	Ac/Ap		R	
e. Quality control	R	C	C	Ac/Ap	R	
2. Coach Identification & Training						
a. Identify promising coaches	R	R			C	
b. Develop plan for training each coach	R				C	
c. Quality control for each coach	R				C	
d. Develop standards for coaches (belts)	C		Ac/Ap		R	R
e. Certify /accredit coaches	Ac		Ap		R	

Key Functions	Franchises (leaders & coaches)	Partner Orgs	Full Board	Exec Comm	NCT	Work Groups
f. ID and support “black belt” master coaches (trainers)	C				R	
g. Identify new training product needs	R		Ap		R	
h. Develop & refine training tools	C				R	R
3. Coach Placement & Deployment						
a. Serve as clearing house for proj requests	R				R	
b. Coordinate intra-franchise	R					
c. Coordinate across franchise	C	R			R	
d. Deploy master coaches/trainers as needed	C	C			R	
4. Technical Support & Innovation						
a. Identify / publicize field innovations	R	R	Ac		R	
b. Help develop new tools as needed	C				R	R
c. Support innovation within organization	R	R				
5. Knowledge Sharing						
a. Promote learning culture	R	R	R	R	R	
b. Serve as hub for dissemination	R	R			R	
c. Coordinate sharing across Network and beyond	R	R	Ac		R	
d. Plan and implement Rally and other major Network events	C	C		C	R	R
e. Develop and maintain website, etc.	C	C		C	R	R
6. Marketing & Communications & Advocacy						
a. Develop general marketing strategy	C	C		Ac/Ap	R	
b. Champion/market network within their org	R	R		Ac	R	
c. Advocate for network issues	R			R	R	
7. Funding & Fundraising						
a. Cover project costs	R	R				
b. Support coaches and trainings in franchise	R	R		Ac?		
c. Provide funding to franchises	R	R			C	
d. Fundraise and/or provide staff support for central network activities	R?	R/C	Ac/Ap	R?	R	R
e. Fundraise and/or provide staff support for special R&D projects		R/C	Ac/Ap	R?	R	R
8. Network Governance & Planning						
a. Develop strategic plan	C	C	Ap	Ac	R	R
b. Report annually to organizations	C	R		Ac	C	
c. Make big picture decisions *	I/C		R	Ac	C	
d. Make medium decisions *				R/C	R/C	
e. Make day-to-day decisions *				C/I	R	
9. Monitoring & Evaluation						
a. Develop M&E framework	C		C	C	R	R
b. Monitor franchises	R		Ac?	Ac?	C	
c. Monitor overall network			Ac/Ap	Ac	R	
d. Collect data	R	R?			R	
e. Use information to assess progress and assist with adaptive management toward shared goals	R	R		R	R	
f. Compile reports	I	I	I	I	R	R

* Specific decisions to be assigned