



# **ATLANTIC CANADA SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE STEERING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE (May 30, 2008)**

## **I. Background**

The Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (ACSI) is celebrating the successful completion of its first year. Over the last year, the ACSI and its Sustainability Partners (13 organizations who signed a project charter, making a formal commitment to taking action on sustainability in their organizations) have worked towards greater sustainability in Atlantic Canada. The first sustainability project of its kind at a regional level, the ACSI has built a strong network of organizations and communities involved in working towards creating sustainable communities and organizations. The over 40 ACSI stakeholders have expressed a desire to see ACSI continue this momentum.

ACSI now has an opportunity to determine its future course by answering questions such as:

1. What will ACSI's key strategic objectives be?
2. How will it be structured and funded?
3. What kind of services will it provide?
4. What level and type of commitment will it ask for from its stakeholders?

At the ACSI Sustainability Summit hosted in April 2008 by the Centre for Rural Sustainability, ACSI stakeholders supported the formation of a steering committee to coordinate the future direction of ACSI. It was also agreed that the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative will continue to be housed with the Centre for Rural Sustainability while the Steering Committee explores and develops its strategic objectives and next steps for ACSI.

## **II. Purpose**

The ACSI Steering Committee will examine the above questions and will work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop a strategic plan for the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Committee members will solicit input and feedback from current and potential sustainability partners and their extensive networks, ACSI network partners, and other stakeholders.

## **III. Committee Structure and Guidelines**

The Steering Committee will have 10 to 12 members in total and will be led by two co-chairs. Reporting to the co-chairs, a staff member (Project Coordinator) will provide support to the Steering Committee and will continue to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative. The Project Coordinator will also sit on the committee as an ex-officio member. The current Steering Committee members are listed in Appendix A.

### Decision-making and minutes of meetings

The day-to-day decision-based activities of the Committee are to be conducted on the basis of consensus and every effort must be made to take into account feedback and input from all members of the Steering committee. Where consensus is not possible / plausible, a vote will be conducted and a majority decision will be made.

Formal decisions cannot be made without a quorum of 50% + one of the members of the Steering Committee.

All formal motions put forth and passed will be officially recorded and minutes of the meetings.

### Changes to Terms of Reference

Changes to the terms of reference may be ratified via a motion and upon agreement of the Committee either through consensus or via a vote.

## **IV. Committee Roles and Responsibilities**

### Committee members commit to:

1. Doing their utmost to attend all scheduled committee meetings. Missing two or more consecutive meetings without reason may result in removal from the committee.
2. Representing ACSI Sustainability partners, Network partners and other stakeholders.
3. Taking a leadership role in the future development of ACSI by providing direction, working to achieve objectives and supporting the work of staff. Tasks will include but not limited to:
  - Networking and bringing new partners into ACSI
  - Sharing knowledge-based resources
  - Writing letters of support for funding proposals
  - Meeting with potential funders
4. Giving timely feedback (within a specified timeframe) on and input into draft documents.
5. Supporting the committee through the provision of meeting space or other services.

### Other interim responsibilities of the Committee:

1. Support the Centre for Rural Sustainability and The Natural Step Canada with conducting wrap up activities as identified by ACSI Summit participants (development of a final report on ACSI's first year including partner case studies, final report on the Summit and celebratory media event).

### Steering Committee Co-chairs:

1. Establish meetings and provide reasonable advance notice of meetings.
2. Prepare agenda and submit to Committee members with advance notice.
3. Ensure members receive information that is accurate and clear in a timely manner to enable them to make sound decisions.
4. Provide needed resources and solicit information on behalf of the committee to assist with decision-making.
5. Involve all members in decision-making.
6. Ensure members are empowered to make decisions and that their decisions are upheld and supported.
7. Send meeting minutes and follow-up to any meeting to the Committee and any other appropriate parties within 10 days of the meeting.
8. Continue to manage the regular activities of the ACSI through providing direction to staff (Project Coordinator).

### **V. Organizational Role**

The Centre for Rural Sustainability (CRS) commits to:

1. Continuing to house and facilitate ACSI and the work of the Steering Committee until the strategic plan is complete and next steps are determined.
2. Providing needed resources/soliciting information on behalf of the committee to assist with decision-making.
3. Conducting wrap up activities as identified by ACSI Summit participants (development of a final report on ACSI's first year including partner case studies, final report on the Summit and celebratory media event) and soliciting feedback and support from the committee as needed on these activities.
4. Coordinate with the ACSI Project Coordinator to continue to manage the regular activities of the ACSI to maintain momentum (i.e. keeping the website up to date, issuing the monthly Sustainability Bulletin, responding to phone calls and emails, etc.).

### **VI. Budget Management**

The committee is responsible for ensuring proactive and efficient management of the budget. Where a decision may have a financial outcome for the Centre for Rural Sustainability as the current host of ACSI, over and above the amount budgeted and available for ACSI, CRS reserves the right to make a final decision regarding these matters.

### **VII. Appendices with these Terms of Reference**

1. Appendix A – ACSI Steering Committee Members

## APPENDIX A – ACSI STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (MAY 22, 2008)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Phone</b>
John Colton (Chair)	Centre for Rural Sustainability	john.colton@acadiau.ca	902-585- 1012
Kuli Malhotra (Vice Chair)	Antigonish Sustainable Development	kmalhotra.asdp@gmail.com	902-863- 2351 ext. 240
Amelia Clarke	Sierra Club of Canada	Amelia.Clarke@sierraclub.ca	902-425- 8612
Keith Cossey	Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada - Rural Secretariat	cosseyk@agr.gc.ca	902-426- 8570
Justin Dearing	Ocean Net	jpgdearing@oceannet.ca	709-753- 3680
Tamara Lorincz	Nova Scotia Environmental Network	nsen@cen-rce.org	902-454- 6846
Willy Robinson	iNOVA Credit Union	wrobinson@inovacreditunion.coop	902-453- 8870
Julie Turcotte	Halifax Global	julie.turcotte@halifaxglobal.com	902-454- 5538
Sarah Brooks	The Natural Step Canada	sbrooks@naturalstep.ca	613-748- 3001 ext. 229
Clare Levin (ex- officio)	ACSI Staff	coordinator@atlanticsustainability.ca	902-830- 1120