
**SOUTHERN GULF OF
ST. LAWRENCE
COALITION ON SUSTAINABILITY**

PROSPECTUS

September 16, 1999

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGES
A BACKGROUND	3
B THE COALITION: WHO ARE WE?	4
C COALITION PHILOSOPHY	4
➤ Our Vision	4
➤ Our Mission	4
➤ Our Mandate	4
➤ Our Values	4
D HOW THE COALITION WILL WORK	5
1. Coalition Partners	5
2. Coalition Organizational Chart	6
3. Coalition Governance	6
4. Coalition Task Groups	7
5. Coalition Coordination	7
6. Election of Steering Committee	7
7. Appointment of Management Committee	7
E BENEFITS OF THE COALITION	8
Generic Benefits of the Coalition	8
Benefits Specific to Each Partner	8
1. Community Organizations and Individuals	8
2. Federal Government	8
3. Provincial Governments	9
4. Municipal Governments	9
5. First Nations	9
6. Business and Industry	9
7. Academia	9

A BACKGROUND

The Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence is a very important ecological, economic and social region of North America:

1. Communities along the Gulf coast of Atlantic Canada and Québec depend on the Gulf's resources for income and recreational opportunities.
2. The Gulf receives its waters from the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River system and the Northwest Atlantic Ocean. It is subject to considerable shipping traffic, some local, most en-route to the industrial corridor of southern Ontario and Québec.
3. The Gulf is of particular importance to communities along the Southern Gulf, since it supports numerous commercial fisheries, industrial activities and recreational uses.
4. It provides critical spawning, feeding and nursery grounds for numerous species of fish and shellfish, birds and other animals. It also supports key environments such as salt marshes, beaches, estuaries and Acadian forests which provide habitats, among other uses, for a diverse assortment of wildlife.

No efforts have been spared since the early 70's to promote the sustainability of the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. A recent key initiative was the 1997 Miramichi Workshop entitled "Working Together: The Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Environmental Workshop". The Miramichi Workshop identified key issues, barriers, solutions and a recommended action plan.

A major recommendation of the Miramichi Workshop was the establishment of a community-based, multi-stakeholder working group mandated (1) to establish priorities for the issues identified at the Workshop and (2) to recommend options for future actions for the purpose of conserving and protecting the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence ecosystem.

Accordingly, an interim Steering Committee was established and a follow-up workshop was held in November 1998. Workshop participants adopted a working document containing the Coalition's philosophy (vision, mission, mandate, values) and key components of a decision-making structure. The interim Steering Committee also organized seven (7) regional focus group meetings which were held in Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in early 1999. These zone meetings were seen as a necessary lead up to a founding meeting of the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Coalition on Sustainability.

The founding meeting of the Coalition is scheduled for November 19-20, 1999 in Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

B THE COALITION: WHO ARE WE?

We are a not-for-profit coalition of partners whose common purpose is to promote the long term viability of the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Region. We envision the future in which the Region is sustainable environmentally, economically and socially. We believe that our environment, our economy and our society are inter-dependent and mutually supportive. We are convinced that our partnership can make it happen!

C COALITION PHILOSOPHY

Our Vision

We envision the future in which the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

Our Mission

The mission of the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Coalition on Sustainability is to promote the long term viability of its ecosystem.

Our Mandate

As a forum of partners, the Coalition will provide services to make it happen. The Coalition will:

1. Facilitate communications, networking and information sharing among Coalition partners.
2. Organize and facilitate inter-provincial, inter-regional and sectoral meetings, workshops, forums or task forces.
3. Recommend priority strategies, policies and regulations.
4. Monitor the progress of implemented strategies, policies and regulations.
5. Encourage partners in assisting communities to build their capacity and achieve their sustainability goals.
6. Facilitate access to expertise.
7. Promote awareness and education on sustainability.

Our Values

Our decisions and our actions are guided by the following values:

1. Residents prosper economically and socially in a sustainable community.
2. Communities are empowered to shape and implement their own sustainability solutions.

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3. Coalition partners address sustainability in a proactive, comprehensive and interdisciplinary manner.
 4. The Coalition is community-based and membership-led.
 5. The Coalition respects the mandate of its member organizations, agencies and businesses.
 6. The governance structure of the Coalition is democratic and facilitates transparent decision-making.
 7. Coalition partners communicate with mutual understanding and respect.
 8. Coalition partners strive to build consensus.
 9. The Coalition manages its human, material and financial resources in a responsible manner.

D HOW THE COALITION WILL WORK

How will the Coalition go about accomplishing its mission and mandate in accordance with its values?

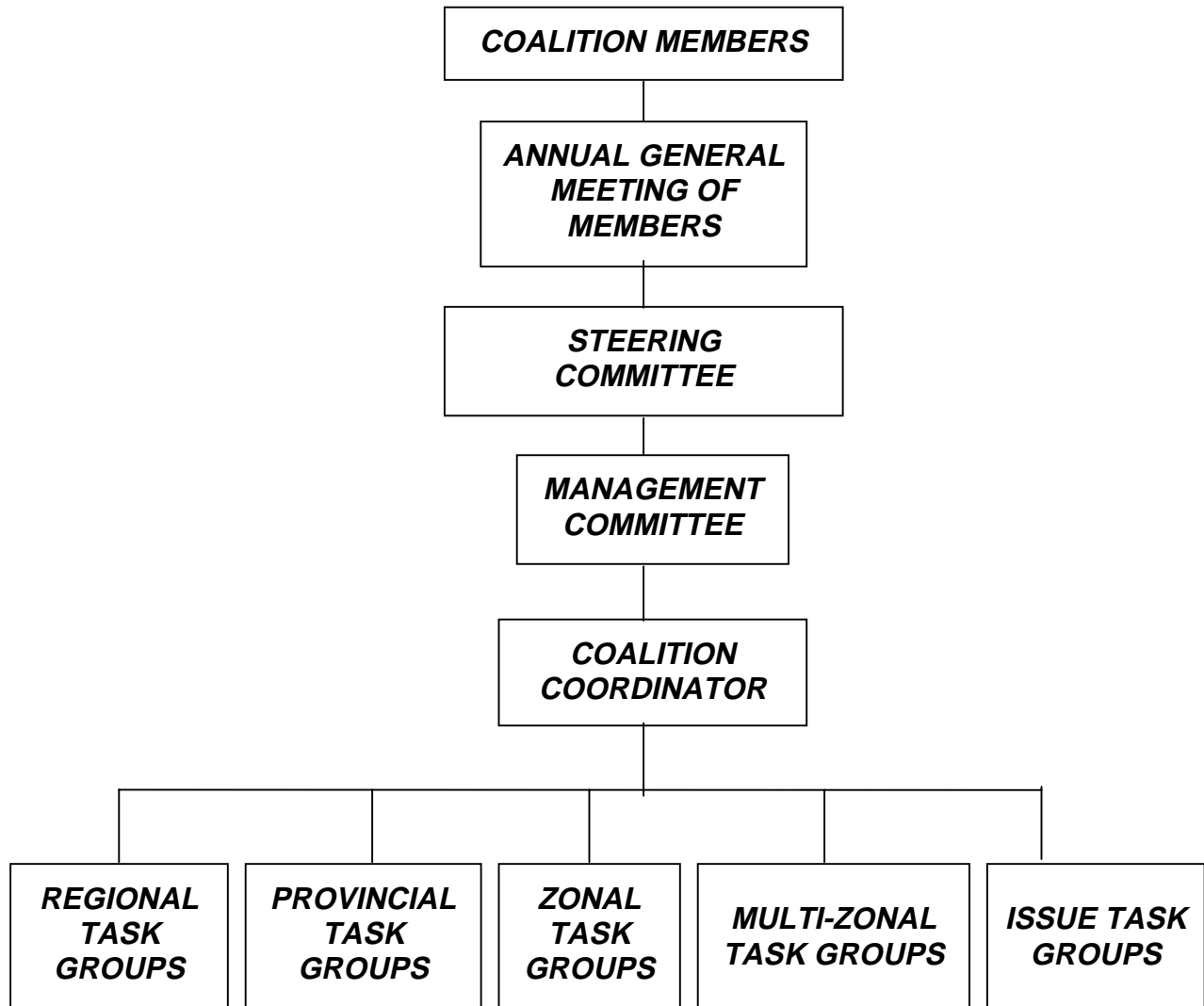
The partners will strive to coordinate their efforts through a Coalition. Decisions will be reached on a consensus basis, by general agreement.

1. Coalition Partners

The Coalition consists of seven (7) categories of partners in four (4) provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Québec), as follows:

- Community Organizations, NGOs and Individuals
- Federal Government
- Provincial Governments
- Municipal Governments
- First Nations
- Businesses and Industries
- Academia (Universities, Colleges, Private Institutions).

2. Coalition Organizational Chart



3. Coalition Governance

The Coalition partners meet once a year during their Annual General Meeting (AGM) to agree on the general orientations of the Coalition (Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values and Strategic Goals in order of priority), to review its constitution and by-laws and to elect the members of the Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee, elected at the AGM, adopts the policies and annual workplan of the Coalition in accordance with the orientation adopted by the AGM, and is responsible for the overall direction of the Coalition on behalf of the membership.

The Management Committee, appointed by the Steering Committee, oversees the implementation of the decisions, strategies and policies of the Steering Committee, and is fully responsible for all Coalition staff matters.

4. Coalition Task Groups

Task Groups are the major implementation mechanism of the Coalition.

Task Groups may be established by the Steering Committee to address specific issues identified by the Coalition partners.

All partner representatives and other relevant persons may participate in Task Groups.

Task Groups may be established at various levels: Regional, provincial, zonal, multi-zonal, and issue-oriented regardless of geographic boundaries.

5. Coalition Coordination

A Coalition Coordinator coordinates workplan activities of the Steering Committee and the various task groups under the direction of the Management Committee.

6. Election of Steering Committee

The Coalition membership is composed of member organizations (such as community / provincial / regional organizations, government departments / agencies, businesses, bands, institutions) and individual members.

During the Founding Meeting to be held in November 1999, delegates will be invited to elect a Steering Committee which will ensure a balanced representation of all partners of the Coalition.

Prior to the Founding Meeting, the seven partner categories will each nominate the designated number of representatives for election to the Steering Committee.

7. Appointment of Management Committee

The Steering Committee will appoint, from among their number, a Management Committee comprised of four (4) officers and two (2) members at large. The officers are: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

E BENEFITS OF THE COALITION

GENERIC BENEFITS OF THE COALITION

- The Coalition provides a *forum for partners* who share the same vision and want to implement priority solutions to enhance the sustainability of the Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence.
- Coalition partners have complementary responsibilities with respect to the sustainability of the region. By sitting around the same table, partners can agree on a common and focused action plan with each partner assuming the responsibilities within his/her own area of expertise, interest or authority.
- No one partner has the resources to implement a meaningful sustainability strategy for the total Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Coalition allows the pooling of human, technological and financial resources for a meaningful impact on the sustainability of the region.
- The Coalition establishes a mechanism for enhancing the horizontal communication among partners, which allows for a rational sharing of perceptions and striving for consensual agreement.

BENEFITS SPECIFIC TO EACH PARTNER

- 1. Community Organizations and Individuals**
 - Community organizations will be able to expand their influence and effectiveness within the larger context of the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. Opportunities can be shared, information exchanged and lessons learned passed on to neighbouring communities.
- 2. Federal Government**
 - Government decisions made in consensus with the communities they impact are more adapted to community needs and are more easily implemented by all partners who have a stake in them.
 - The Coalition is a window of opportunity for government departments, making it easier to reach broad-based stakeholders. Instead of dealing with many spokespersons individually from a community, the Coalition would be a forum for all stakeholders to act as partners to improve current situations.

3. Provincial Governments

- The four provincial governments will benefit from the enhanced outreach potential of the coalition, as well as the ability to use the group as a sounding board for issues and program ideas. The coalition will provide an opportunity to increase the level of coordination among provinces, federal agencies and First Nations.
- By participating in task groups with their other partners, they will acquire insights that will enhance the impact of their sustainability strategies and their implementation in the communities.

4. Municipal Governments

- Municipal governments are dedicated to fostering the quality of life of their citizens and their visitors by having an appropriate tax base. As a partner in the Coalition, municipal governments will incorporate sustainability standards in their planning process.

5. First Nations

- The involvement of First Nations in the Coalition can serve as a catalyst to achieve some of their self-government and self-determination objectives.

6. Business and Industry

- The Coalition is a window of opportunity for businesses and industries to integrate into communities by becoming appreciated corporate community citizens. Working with other community stakeholders within the Coalition provides the opportunity for businesses to demonstrate their genuine interest in the welfare of the larger community. It is an opportunity to develop Best Management Practices in the area of sustainability.
- If businesses and industries are to integrate in the community, it is to their advantage to consider the welfare of the community which provides their workforce.

7. Academia

- The Coalition provides universities and colleges the opportunity to develop and apply sustainability concepts to a wide ranging spectrum of professions and trades. This will assist in the development of new methods for achieving sustainable results.