

CSIN Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

– Final –

January 28, 2008

1. Introduction

The Canadian Sustainability Indicators Network (CSIN) was launched by a group of people interested in developing a Canadian indicators network at the March meeting of the International Sustainability Indicators Network (ISIN) in Toronto in 2003. CSIN quickly took shape, operating with a volunteer steering committee and a coordinator provided by Environment Canada. In March 2005, CSIN coordination was passed on to the International Institute for Sustainable Development under the Measurement and Assessment program. A part-time coordinator position was created and the CSIN Website was transferred to the IISD server. Since its inception CSIN has grown to over 450 practitioners working in a variety of academic, government, private sector and non- governmental organizations across Canada and the world.

CSIN offers Canadian indicator and reporting practitioners a national organization focused on helping them to meet and share information and ideas. It is linking the growing number of sustainability reporters across Canada with each other and with colleagues and centres of expertise around the world. CSIN operates as a Community of Practice, an approach that emphasizes self-governance, self-selection and participation based on interest, capturing knowledge, and encouraging learning and innovation.

The four major goals of CSIN are:

- Creating a place for learning about indicators and reporting;
- Helping people to share ideas and approaches to indicators and reporting;
- Helping to strengthen indicator work in Canada;
- Providing a gateway to international work on indicators and reporting.

To achieve these goals, CSIN uses a combination of face-to-face meetings, online discussions and Internet-based Learning Events to help people meet each other and share expertise.

2. Advisory Objectives:

The CSIN Advisory Committee shall advise the coordinator on strategic direction for the management, advancement and future planning for the CSIN network. In particular, the Advisory Committee shall:

- Be representative of a range of Canadian sustainability indicator practitioners;
- Provide strategic advice to achieve CSIN goals, activities and long-term plans;
- Provide advice on fund development and annual budgeting.

3. Membership, roles and deliverables:

Membership:

CSIN Advisory Committee shall be composed of up to fifteen volunteer members who are linked to sustainability indicators and representing a cross-section of interests and activities. There is a desire have regional representation on the Committee, but it is not a requirement. The Committee would hence be comprised of, but not limited to, individual experts from the following sectors within Canada:

- Federal Government
- Provincial Government
- Municipal Government
- Non Governmental Organization
- Academia
- Corporate
- Consultant

Roles:

The Advisory Committee shall act solely as an advisory body to CSIN. Nothing in these terms of reference constitutes authority to perform operational or management functions, or to represent or make decisions on behalf of the network. The Advisory Committee shall draw on the expertise of its members and other sources in order to provide advice to CSIN coordinator.

Deliverables:

- The CSIN Advisory Committee shall provide recommendations on strategic directions and on the undertaking of new activities by the network;
- The Advisory Committee shall suggest directions for CSIN events, including but not limited to CSIN Learning Events, Conferences, Workshops and publications;
- The Advisory Committee shall advise on budget, fundraising, policy and cross-cutting issues affecting CSIN's operations in light of its foreseen activities.

4. Consultation Procedure:

CSIN Advisory Committee meetings will be held periodically to assess and evaluate the network's strategic direction, activities and outputs. These will be done primarily through teleconferences of 1 to 1.5 hours in duration and when possible through physical meetings. A maximum of three to four meeting(s) per year are envisioned. Advisory Committee meetings will be called by CSIN's coordinator as interest or issues develop. In addition, the Advisory Committee members are able to call a meeting if an urgent topic has to be addressed.

In addition to the above-mentioned meetings, individual Advisory Committee members might be asked to provide CSIN with additional recommendations. This might happen during the year in a very limited manner on specific issues, through communication via telephone or e-mails.