

Climate Science Alliance- South Coast Organization and Governance Structure

The Climate Science Alliance- South Coast (Alliance) is a partnership of organizations and agencies focused on sharing ecosystem-based resiliency approaches to safeguard our communities and natural resources from climate change risks.

Organizational History

Vision Team

The Vision Team was first convened in April 2015 to provide input and ideas to establish the foundation and direction for the Alliance over the course of the development of the organization in its first year. Collectively, the Team was tasked with helping to build a regional vision to promote and implement ecosystem-based resiliency approaches to safeguard our communities and natural resources from climate change. The Vision Team was diverse in its composition representing expertise and responsibilities for natural resource conservation and management, scientific research, human health, agriculture, water resources, military operations, and local government. Members were chosen for their expertise and reputations for being collaborative and constructive in their suggestions as well as their willingness to help build a vision for the region that protects our resources and our communities.

The Vision Team was tasked with developing the Alliance's strategic plan, governance structure, and decision-making policies through a collaborative process to ensure the mission and focus of the group met the diverse needs of future Alliance partners. The Vision Team was intended to function for a limited duration and, in 2016 was replaced with a work-group structure that is overseen by a permanent Advisory Team. Working Groups will jointly pursue implementation of Alliance goals, objectives, strategies, and tasks that are to be shared with the broader group at biannual Alliance Network Meetings.



Organizational Structure and Composition:

The Alliance is governed by a group of strategic leaders that represent the broad expertise and communities of the Alliance partners. Below is a description of how these strategic leaders and partners constitute and govern the Alliance.

Advisory Team:

The Advisory Team consists of 5-10 members that represent Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies, organizations and NGOs working to advance nature-based climate adaptation planning and implementation in the South Coast region. Members will serve two-year terms and be elected by the Alliance partners on a bi-annual basis or when there is a vacancy. The Advisory Team will provide guidance on the operations of the Alliance and its strategic direction.

Specific responsibilities/requirements of Advisory Team members are to:

- Play a **leadership role** in guiding and supporting Alliance operations.
- **Provide** strategic guidance on the operation of the Alliance and support the Working Groups.
- Serve as a **champion and spokesperson** for the Alliance to help promote its achievements and activities.
- **Commit** to regular attendance at Advisory Team meetings (no fewer than 75% of meetings), engagement with the Alliance staff and Director, and participation (including oversight) with at least one Working Group.
- **Bring additional resources** to support the implementation of Alliance goals and objectives

Working Groups:

Initially, Working Groups will be based on the three pillars of the Alliance: Science Focused Partnership, Climate Smart Conservation, and Innovative Community Engagement. Working Groups will be established to achieve specific outcomes as identified in the strategic plan. While each Working Group will have unique tasks to accomplish, there will be overlapping goals that can only be accomplished through inter-group collaboration. Each Working Group is expected to provide the necessary support to ensure the Alliance as a whole is successful in achieving the goals and objectives set out in the Alliance Strategic Plan.

Working Group leaders will serve two-year terms and be nominated by the members of each Working Group and approved by the Director and Advisory Team on a bi-annual basis or when there is a vacancy. Group leads will be responsible for organizing and facilitating group meetings, tracking and managing group progress on tasks, and reporting back to the Advisory Team and Director on activities and issues within each Working Group. Climate Science Alliance staff are available to assist Working Groups as needed and appropriate.

- Working Groups will identify partnerships and projects **to accomplish goals and deliverables outlined in the strategic plan.**
- Working Groups are **empowered and encouraged to recruit others** in the Alliance Network to achieve identified outcomes.
- Advisory Team members will participate in or play a leadership role in Working Groups to ensure group activities are consistent with the goals of the Alliance the strategic work plan.
- Working Group leads will set schedules and agendas for meetings and report back to the Advisory Team and Alliance Director on group progress and projects.
- **Working Groups will work cooperatively** in areas where there are synergies between the three pillars requiring expertise from one Working Group to facilitate the accomplishment of strategic plan goals for other Working Groups.
- The **creation of new Working Groups** beyond those tied directly to the three pillars of the Alliance will be **subject to approval** by the Advisory Team and Alliance Director
- Quarterly meetings to focus on workgroup activities and information sharing that advances goals and objectives of the Alliance.

Alliance Network Affiliates

- Alliance Network as a whole (80+ organizations and entities)
- Gathered annually at the Alliance Network Event
- Quarterly meetings to focus on **Working Group activities** and information sharing that advances goals and objectives of the Alliance.
- *Quarterly meetings of Working Groups and advisory committee leaders that are open to anyone interested and provide an opportunity to establish new Alliance partnerships.*

Alliance Staff

- Director: The Director will have ultimate decision-making authority for the group if consensus cannot be reached, will oversee the Advisory Team and Alliance Staff, and will lead the Alliance with assistance of the Advisory Team and Alliance Staff.
- Outreach and Scientific Program Managers: Program managers will play lead roles in directing their respective program areas and in the Working Groups associated with their programs.
- Program Leads: Program leads will facilitate administrative and organizational tasks for the workgroups they assist. Each lead will be designated to a particular focal area of the Alliance.
- Interns: Staff interns will provide support where needed and may be shared with collaborating organizations.
- Support Staff: Additional program staff may be needed to assist with Working Group projects or Alliance administrative tasks such as web support and maintenance. The need for these positions will be determined by the Director with input from the Advisory Team.

Governance

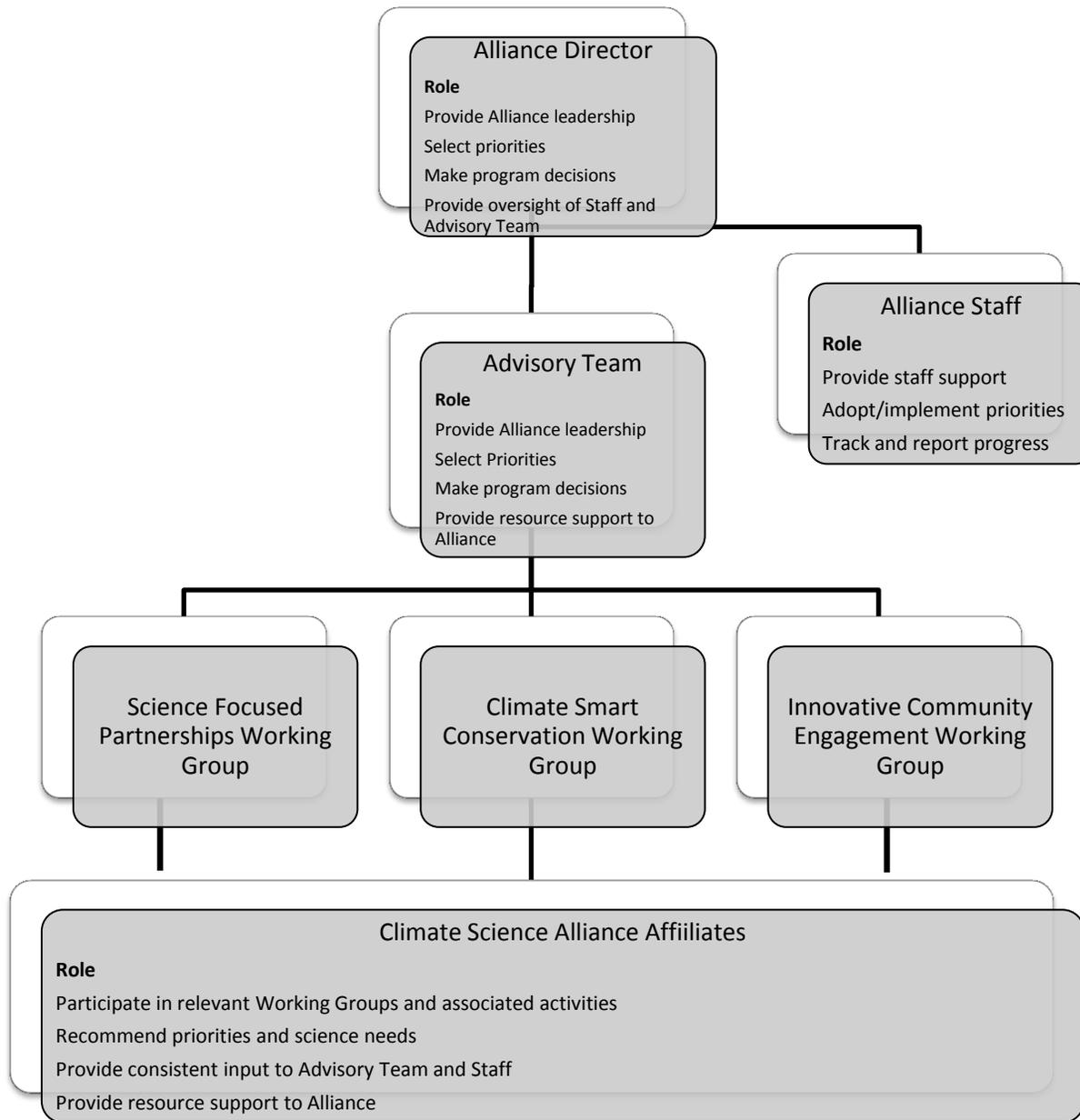
General Principles of Collaboration

Using the following general principals of collaboration, the Vision Team and Alliance staff agree to:

- Commit to expending the time, energy, and organizational resources necessary to meet the Alliance goals and objectives;
- Recognize the validity of and be prepared to listen to differing points of view;
- Recognize the complexity involved in preparing local ecosystems and communities for climate change impacts; and
- Regard disagreements as problems to be solved, not battles to be won.

Decision-Making

The staff will strive to incorporate all Advisory Team perspectives into the decision-making process on substantive issues and recommendations using a consensus-based decision making strategy. Taking this approach to decision making does not mean that complete, enthusiastic support for every recommendation will be required to move forward with Alliance decisions. It does mean that deliberate effort will be made to respectfully address opposing points of view and work to identify potential areas of agreement. Ultimately, final decisions on Alliance activities will lie with the Advisory Team and the Alliance Director if consensus cannot be reached.



Code of Conduct

All Climate Science Alliance partners shall be respectful of other Alliance partners and not discriminate against others on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, creed, religion, race, color, national origin, age, economic status, disability, or organizational affiliation. Alliance members will not practice or condone harassment in any form. Members will strive to accurately represent scientific understanding and knowledge and to avoid and discourage dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements about climate science. Members will not represent themselves as spokespersons for the Alliance without express authorization by the Director or Advisory Team. Similarly, the Alliance does not claim to represent any single entity, but rather the partnership between all parties.

Conflict Resolution

Should disagreement arise among Working Group or Advisory Team members, the group will strive to first resolve the disagreement and reach consensus internally with the assistance of Alliance staff by referencing the goals and objectives for further guidance. Should conflict remain, <http://consensusdecisionmaking.org/Articles/Basics%20of%20Consensus%20Decision%20Making.html> provides ground rules for consensus-based decision making that relies on levels of consensus and how to address disagreement. If the conflict cannot be resolved in a satisfactory manner using these methods, the services of a professional facilitator may be retained to use a joint fact-finding process or other appropriate conflict resolution model.

Climate Science Alliance Representation to Other Organizations

To further the regional and national voice of the Alliance, we will strive to establish representation of the Alliance with state and national organizations. Alliance representatives to these groups will be selected by the Director and Advisory Team and will be authorized as a spokesperson and decision-maker for the Alliance to those groups.

CA LCC Steering Committee

The Climate Science Alliance Vision Team unanimously agreed that requesting a seat for an Alliance representative on the CA LCC would benefit the Alliance as well as climate initiatives and conservation goals in southern California. The Advisory Team identified and nominated a representative and alternate who would be committed to participating in Steering Committee activities and would provide the Alliance's connection to the CA LCC. The representative and alternate may be replaced if either can no longer fulfill that commitment. Representatives will serve a two-year term at which point the Advisory Team will consider nominations for new representation. The Alliance representative will report back to the Advisory Panel and the rest of the Alliance network on CA LCC Steering Committee activities and will serve as a contact point for Alliance members to increase transparency in CA LCC activities, particularly in southern California.