WA Coastal and Marine Community Network

Terms of Reference

Background

The Western Australian (WA) Coastal and Marine Community Network (CMCN) supports connection, collaboration and engagement for the health and sustainability of Western Australia's coastal and marine environments. The Network was established in February 2020 in response to an identified need for enhanced coordination of the work of community organisations engaged in coastal and marine conservation and management activities. It was also established to serve as a centralised data repository for use by community organisations as well as local, State and Federal government agencies.

The CMCN is a network of diverse stakeholders with a passion for the WA coastal and marine environment, who interact to learn together and from each other. In WA, valuable coastal and marine conservation and management work is already undertaken by individuals, community groups, private organisations, research organisations and government agencies (termed collectively the 'WA coastal and marine community' or 'Community' herein). The CMCN believes that through the sharing of good practice, knowledge of coastal and marine processes and ecological data, and the facilitation of education and training, conservation and management outcomes will be maximised for the benefit of the whole Western Australian community and coast. There is currently no other such organisation or mechanism that facilitates resource sharing or cohesion for coastal and marine stakeholders in this manner.

Purpose

The CMCN will facilitate collaboration and cohesion in coastal and marine management activities in Western Australia by:

• Providing a coordinating network across all of Western Australia,

• Acting as a point of connection between members of the Community already engaged in coastal and marine conservation and management activities,

• Providing a repository for information, data and knowledge that can be shared by the coastal and marine community, and used in their work, and

• Promoting a healthy and sustainable coastal and marine environment.

Guiding Principles

The CMCN is committed to:

1. Collaboration: Acting as a focal point for members of the WA coastal and marine community seeking opportunities for collaboration on coastal and marine conservation and management activities

2. Open-access: Facilitating the development of a data repository that is supported by secure and managed storage, which provides the Community with access to information that is suitable for decision-making, research, training and education purposes.

3. Subsidiarity and inclusivity: Recognising and supporting the work of the diverse WA coastal and marine community in Western Australia, including in the collection, collation and dissemination of knowledge, information and data.

4. Spatial integrity: Western Australia's variable geomorphological and ecological settings underpin the approach to the collation of data. Geographic location (eg: at regional, primary compartment, secondary compartment, and sediment cell scales) provides the basis for the categorisation of data, including but not limited to, photographs, survey data, beach use counts and other information.

5. Sustainability: Long-term sustainability of the network and its role in supporting collegial and coordinated coastal and marine management in Western Australia.

CMCN Goals

CMCN has five goals:

1. Develop a sustainable and integrated network that supports on ground coastal action, long-term coastal and marine conservation and monitoring, which is not limited by jurisdiction or location.

2. Improve the quality and accessibility of information (including data) used in decision-making from all sectors, including government, non-government and academic.

3. Raise awareness of the importance of coastal and marine management and conservation in Western Australia by facilitating outreach, education and training opportunities.

4. Recognise coastal and marine communities, including Aboriginal communities, in their coastal and marine management and conservation actions.

5. Assist the Community to identify and secure resources for coastal and marine management activities.

CMCN Organisational Structure and Membership

The Network brings together individuals and groups with an interest in the WA coastal and marine environment. The Network operates via a:
- Core Strategic Group: who provide leadership and strategic networking
- Working Group Members: who take an active role in the Network to achieve the Network's goals. Working Group Members contribute to one or more key Network themes.
- Members: members who engage in communication (e.g. email list, meetings) and benefit from Network, although do not take an active role.
- An Advisory Group: that provides input and advice to the Core Strategic Group on an as-needs basis.

Members of the Core Strategic Group and Working Groups are nominated and elected by Network members. Terms of membership are detailed under the Nomination and Appointment Process below; along with the roles and responsibilities of Core Strategic Group Members and Working Group members.

CMCN Core Strategic Group Membership

Minimum of six (6) / maximum of eight (8) members, representative of the CMCN and comprising:

- Chair
- Deputy Chair
- Secretary
- Working Group Leads (3)
- Maximum of two (2) additional CMCN Members

CMCN Working Group Membership

- Minimum of three (3) / maximum of eight (8) elected members, representative of the Network theme
    - Working Group Lead
    - Working Group Vice-Lead
    - Working Group Members

Nomination and Appointment Process

- Appointment of the Core Strategic Group and Working Group Roles of Chair, Lead and Vice Chair/Vice-Lead will normally be decided annually at Network meetings (e.g. Annual General Meeting).
- The Core Strategic Group Chair ensures the nomination and appointment process takes place in accordance with the Nomination and Appointment Process.
- Term/Tenure of Chair: The Core Strategic Group Chair, Core Strategic Group and Working Group members will serve a one (1)-year initial tenure, with the option to extend in the instance that no new nominations are received, or if the Chair wishes to renominate along with new nominees and is subsequently elected. Each will serve a maximum of seven (7) years

- A call for nominations will be made at least four (4) weeks prior to the Network meeting.
- The election of Core Strategic Group and Working Group members will be determined by a vote of the CMCN members, when more than one candidate nominates for either role. The outcome of the vote will be determined by the members present at the AGM.
- Co-option: Additional members can be co-opted to fill vacancies or to provide additional skills to the Core Strategic Group or Working Groups by agreement of the relevant Group.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Core Strategic Group Chair and Members

The Core Strategic Group Members provide a strategic perspective that extends beyond their own organisation or area of expertise (e.g. emerging issues and potential new opportunities that advance the vision of the CMCN). In conjunction with the Working Group Members, Core Strategic Group Members steer the development, review and implementation of the CMCN Strategic Plan for the long-term benefit of the West Australian coastal and marine environment.

Core Strategic Group Meetings and Reporting:

I.   The Core Strategic Group will meet at least three times each year.
II.   Agendas will be circulated by the Chair before any meeting
III. Progress on action items from previous meetings will be communicated by Core Strategic Group Members to the Chair before any subsequent meeting
IV.   Outcomes of Core Strategic Group meetings will be distributed, as relevant, to the CMCN Working Groups and Network

The Core Strategic Group Chair will:

I.   provide leadership to the CMCN and ensure the effective operation of the Core Strategic Group;
II.   plan meetings and develop the agenda in conjunction with the other Group members; and
III. ensure agendas and supporting materials are delivered to members prior to the meeting.

The Core Strategic Group Vice-Chair will:

I.   Stand in for the Chair if s/he is away
II.   Support the Chair in ensuring the Group runs smoothly
III. Help the Chair to plan meetings

Quorum and Decision Making

- A quorum will be a minimum of half of the elected Group members.
- Resolutions will require the support of the quorum.
- The Core Strategic Group will not make any financial decisions or commit the CMCN to any financial arrangement without the clear and documented approval of the Core Strategic Group and Working Groups.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Working Group and Working Group Members

In collaboration with the Core Strategic Group, Working Groups steer the development, review and implementation of the CMCN Strategic Plan for the benefit of the West Australian coastal and marine environment.

Working Group Meetings and Reporting:

I.   Working Groups will meet at least three times each year.
II.   Agendas will be circulated by the Working Group Lead before any Working Group meeting
III.   Progress on action items from previous meetings will be communicated by Working Group Members to the Lead
IV.   Outcomes of Working Group meetings will be distributed, as relevant, to the CMCN Core Strategic Group and Network within two weeks of each Working Group meeting

Working Group Leads will:

I.   provide leadership and ensure the effective operation of the Working Group
II.   plan meetings and develop the agenda in conjunction with the other WG members
III.   report on Working Group activities and progress at Core Strategic Group meetings; and
IV.   regularly communicate with members of their Working Group.

Working Group Members will:

I.   Act in the best interests of the CMCN and its objectives
II.   Contribute positively to the business of Working Group meetings.
III.   Stay abreast of coastal and marine related issues and information to contribute knowledgeably to discussions.
IV.   Declare any interest, whether actual or perceived.

Advisory Reference Group

The CMCN may convene an Advisory Reference Group to support the CMCN through the provision of:

I.   Strategic advice to the CMCN ,
II.   Advice on broadening stakeholder and community engagement; and
III.   Support for professional networking.

The Advisory Reference Group will meet on an ad-hoc and as-needs basis, with support for the coordination of meetings provided by the Core Strategic Group.

Review

The CMCN Terms of Reference will be reviewed bi-annually.