

Alberta Water Council
Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity
SECTOR PLAN Project Team
Terms of Reference

Prepared by the Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (CEP) Sector Plan Working Group

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT:

Water For Life has established three goals; 1) safe, secure drinking water supply, 2) healthy aquatic ecosystems, and 3) reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy. Meeting these goals will require the participation of water using sectors in improving water conservation, efficiency and productivity (CEP) in their operations. The Water Conservation Efficiency and Productivity Sector Plan Project Team will prepare a document for the development and implementation of a series of sector plans addressing water use by each of the sectors.

The Working Group (WG) recognizes that while all sectors can realize benefits from CEP plans, some will be in a position to benefit more than others. It is expected that CEP plans will benefit Albertans, the environment and sectors by:

1. Demonstrating stewardship of water through an open and transparent process.
2. Identifying and implementing where feasible, world-class Best Management Practices (BMPs).
3. Identifying (and developing) new technologies that can be transferred within a sector, among sectors or geographically to other locations to improve CEP.
4. Identifying where common opportunities for improvements may occur across sectors.
5. Identifying opportunities that will save sectors money.
6. Informing/educating Albertans on the ways sectors use and manage water.
7. Allowing sectors and watersheds flexibility in making water management decisions, which reflect the diversity of needs within sectors, between sectors, and across watersheds.
8. Identifying gaps in knowledge (common to sectors) where further research may be necessary.

Integrating the work of the sector plan project team with the work of GOA initiatives (e.g. online water use reporting), and other project teams (e.g. Shared Governance Project Team) is important. This integration will ensure that consistent outcomes for conservation, efficiency & productivity are identified, activities are tracked to avoid duplication, and timelines for completion of activities are as coordinated as possible. Of equal importance is the need to ensure planning at all levels is coordinated and complimentary (e.g. among companies, sectors, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils).

The deliverables provided by the project team will help ensure a common understanding of sector water use on the part of Albertans, and will instil confidence that the approaches taken by water users are prudent. The deliverable will also contribute to the successful achievement of *Water For Life* outcomes.

The following areas are identified for work by a sector plan project team:

1. Prepare a document [annotated Table of Contents] for sectors to follow when developing their CEP sector plans. This document will identify elements to be addressed by all sectors in plans, and identify which elements will be required versus optional. These elements may include (list is for illustrative purposes only):
 - Where and how is water used (e.g. withdrawals, reuse, consumptive use, return flow)?
 - What volume of water do you use to produce a unit of any good, service or societal value (i.e. productivity)?
 - What is currently driving water demand?
 - What might future water demand look like (e.g. in 5, 10, 50 years) and what factors may impact this demand?
 - What and where are there opportunities for CEP improvements (e.g. technology, water management)?
 - Where is research needed?
 - What are the environmental constraints regarding water availability and source (i.e. “constraints” in this context refer to “protection of the aquatic ecosystem”)?
 - How will a sector plan contribute to the three *Water For Life* goals?
 - In relation to the three *Water for Life* goals, where might a sector CEP plan have a negative, positive or neutral impact on all other concurrent or dependant water uses (i.e. recreational and tourism uses)?
 - How will CEP targets be determined and what are the proposed timelines for improvements?
 - How will the development of subsector and company plans be promoted within a sector (e.g. through some type of strategic or communications plan)?
 - Outline the level of multistakeholder participation/consultation.
 - How will existing company plans and sector plans be integrated?
 - How will sector plans be integrated with the work of Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils?
2. Identify which water-using sectors/sub-sectors require the development of sector plans (based on criteria such as volume of water used, impact on the environment, potential for CEP gains, etc.). Recommendations will also be made on determining an approach for small sectors and subsectors.

3. Evaluate and outline tools that may be used to address issues of participation and accountability (e.g. generic “negotiated agreements” between the Alberta Water Council and sector Associations, policies, rewards). These tools will consider the need for the following:
 - Involving broad sector participation in developing CEP plans (e.g. Where possible this may be done through umbrella organizations that represent sectors/sub-sectors. However, participation will be challenging in sectors where there are large numbers of water license holders but no umbrella organization representing their interests.).
 - Ensuring that CEP plans include elements identified (in the document referred to in #1 above) as minimum requirements.
 - Identify an “approval” process(es) that ensures consistency among sector plans, encourages sectors to go beyond status quo when setting targets, and ensuring sectors meet or exceed identified targets set out in plans.
 - Ensuring consistent, unbiased and accurate reporting.
 - Ensuring targets and timelines outlined in plans are established and met.
 - Ensuring a transparent process.

4. Work with sectors to collect the following information for future education and target-setting purposes. The WG recognizes that individual sectors are in the best position to gather this information.
 - Best management practices (BMPs) for water conservation, efficiency and productivity by sector.
 - Benchmark¹ water use information by sector.

The AWC believes that by addressing the areas noted above, sectors, Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils and the public will better understand:

- What elements must be considered/addressed by all sectors in the development of sector plans to ensure that plans:
 1. Contribute to *Water for Life* goals.
 2. Are consistent across sectors, and geographically across watersheds.
 3. Reflect a collaborative and integrated approach to managing water and watersheds at all levels.
- Which sectors/sub-sectors are required to develop sector plans and what the relative value is of each of these sectors/sub-sectors in developing plans.
- Examples of tools that address issues of participation and accountability of sectors and the AWC and WPACs. This includes statements outlining implementation, measurement, reporting and transparency.

¹ A measurement or standard that serves as a point of reference by which the performance of a process, components or systems is measured. Benchmarks are used for comparing performance against that of others in the same sector in an effort to identify more efficient and effective processes for achieving intended results (no reference – this definition was developed for the purpose of the WG).

- What best management practices (local and worldwide) are available as references for sectors and as educational resources for the public (recognizing that not all BMPs will be suitable for implementation across Alberta).
- What benchmark water use information is available by sector and where Alberta sectors rank in their water use in relation to the best performers in the world.

This work will be based on sound science and technical approaches already used or applied elsewhere.

This work is an important step in ensuring consistency in sector plan development across sectors and geographically across watersheds.

The Project Team will strive to ensure that the expectations and understanding surrounding these areas are consistent with the intent of the outcomes, and directions as described in *Water For Life* (environmental, economic and social goals), and with the outcomes, principles and definitions of conservation, efficiency and productivity approved by the AWC.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Team members will support the following shared principles:

- Members will work in accordance with the AWC document, "Guidelines for Participating in Council Work".
- Teamwork relies on effective information sharing between project team members and their stakeholders. Team members will support this process by providing relevant, timely and accurate information for consideration from sectors and report decisions made by the project team back to sectors.
- Principles of sound management will be followed such that the Secretariat, under the guidance of the co-chairs, will prepare agendas that are followed with minutes recorded and distributed to team members in a timely manner.
- Team members will ensure that relevant issues are brought to the table for discussion, with emphasis on resolving those issues by means of consensus. The process for consensus will adhere to the definition provided in the AWC's ToR.
- Failure to reach consensus on an issue by the project team will be referred to the AWC for discussion, with a summary of the issue and the differing viewpoints.

TEAM GOALS/ RESULTS / EXPECTATIONS:

The AWC expects the team to provide:

- a) A written document that identifies elements to be included in a sector plan. This document will assist sectors in developing their sector plan. The document will outline the process by which sectors will develop a plan, as well as a framework for how sector planning would be pursued across multiple water using sectors.

NOTE: In this sentence, “outline the process” is not meant to be prescriptive. It is meant to be general in nature to ensure issues such as balanced representation during sector CEP planning are addressed. The “framework” for how sector planning would be pursued is intended to ensure sector plans are consistent and address common goals under WFL.

- b) A list of which sectors require sector/sub-sector plans.
- c) An example(s) of tools for addressing sector participation and accountability (e.g. a cooperative management agreement).
- d) Examples of BMPs for consideration by sectors in their sector planning and for public information.
- e) Examples of water use benchmarks to be used by sectors/sub-sectors.

These will provide consistent understanding on the criteria, accountability, implementation and reporting by sectors on sector plans. In addition, they will provide the public with a clear understanding of what BMPs are available for industry sectors, and where Alberta industry ranks with respect to their use of water in relation to the best performers in the world.

KEY TASKS:

The Team will:

1. Hold regular meetings to maintain involvement and momentum towards completing its tasks.
2. Develop a workplan of key tasks/deliverables (including confirmation of the proposed budget), and the timeframes associated with completing the tasks.
3. Report regularly to the AWC. This will be done by the co-chairs with support from the Secretariat as per the timeline below.
4. Consult with sectors to ensure issues are identified for discussion, and a common and thorough understanding of decisions made by the project team are relayed back to sectors.
5. Ensure that the materials it develops use language that is appropriate and understandable to a broader public audience.
6. Gather information necessary to complete its tasks. Information may be obtained from any appropriate sources. In cases where critical information is not readily available, the team will explore options to fill these needs including contracting the services of consultants. Project team members should rely on readily available documents and other research in these areas to assist them.

The project team will be assisted by a Secretariat.

SCHEDULE OF KEY DELIVERABLES:

The team will report to the AWC at the specified intervals below to give the Council an opportunity to provide feedback and approval at key direction points before the team proceeds to the next stage. This will ensure the AWC is fully engaged and takes a leadership role in the project as it moves forward. Deliverables [and proposed timeframes for completion] include:

- Completion of a document for sectors to follow when developing their CEP plans [Annotated Table of Contents] [June 2007].
- Identification of which sectors should develop plans to ensure maximum benefit [June 2007].
- Outlining and evaluating tools to address issues of sector participation and accountability [September 2007]
- Identify Best Management Practices and benchmarks for water use [Ongoing. To be undertaken in conjunction with sectors in development of CEP plans].
- Project team co-chairs will report on team progress at each AWC meeting.

BUDGET:

It is the responsibility of the AWC to provide a budget to the team for items such as employing a professional minute taker, consultant costs for specific projects including information collection, workshop facilitation, and research to fill information gaps. Other costs may be incurred through team membership (e.g. travel costs).

An estimated budget of \$75,000.00 is required for fiscal year 2007-08. There is an expectation of substantial in-kind sector participation.

TEAM STRUCTURE / MEMBERSHIP:

Membership:

Members of the project team will represent the interests of their broad sector. It is important that the major water using sectors are represented on the project team.

- Industry – one representative from each major sector. Sectors considered for inclusion include: Agriculture, Chemicals/Petrochemicals, Forestry/pulp & paper, Irrigation, Mining, Municipal, Oil & Gas, and Power Generation.
- Provincial Government – two representatives
- Government (non-provincial) – three representatives
- ENGO – three representatives

There is an expectation that this project team will be hard-working, demanding a significant amount of time on the part of sector representatives. Project team representatives must clearly identify the sectors they will be representing and consulting throughout the project.

Depending upon agenda items to be discussed at meetings, sectors may request an individual that is not a regular member of the team to attend the meeting. This is acceptable provided the sector makes the request to the co-chairs or the Secretariat and obtains their approval ahead of the planned meeting.

Project team members will select the co-chairs by consensus at their first meeting.

With the agreement of the team, individual team members may be requested to work on identified tasks, and report back to the team at a later date.

Role of Co-Chairs

- Chair meetings;
- Clarify the AWC's expectations of the team;
- Ensure the team has adequate support to efficiently and effectively carry out its Terms of Reference;
- Inform the team of other programs and initiatives so the team can avoid duplicating work being addressed elsewhere; and
- Serve as liaison to the AWC and Government.

Role of Team Members

Members are expected to attend meetings regularly and provide relevant, timely and accurate information for the team's consideration. Team members should consult with their sectors to ensure issues are identified for discussion by the Team, and decisions made by the Team are relayed back to sectors. Members missing more than 3 consecutive meetings without reasonable cause will be asked to be replaced through consultation with the respective agency/sector they represent.

Alternate Members

Team members may send an alternate in their place if they are unable to attend a meeting. The team member named as the formal designate to the team is responsible to remain informed about current discussions.

Role of Secretariat

Under the guidance of the co-chairs, the Secretariat will prepare agendas, coordinate meetings, record discussions, and develop progress and final reports that reflect the teams' direction in a succinct and unbiased manner.

In co-operation with the Secretariat, a secretary will record meeting discussions and prepare a set of succinct written minutes, including Action Items to the team.

The Secretariat will reasonably assist individual team members with communication to their sectors when requested (and agreed to) by team members.

SIGNIFICANT PARAMETERS OR CONSTRAINTS:

Water users in Alberta are many and varied, which presents a significant challenge to the development of a single province-wide document to guide all sector plans. This variability is coupled with the fact that the water supply is also variable (in time and space) across the province and projected demands in water use for economic production are often beyond the control of the water user. Unpredictable environmental conditions (eg. drought) places additional pressures on water supplies. Recreational and other social uses of water are likely to increase.

Additional considerations that could influence the work of the project team include:

- Timing and outcomes of the Shared Governance Project Team's work that will outline the roles and responsibilities of Government, WPACs/WSGs with respect to water/watershed management;
- The availability and effectiveness of economic instruments, policies and other tools for influencing sector participation; and
- Changing legislative and regulatory considerations for water.