

Memorandum of Understanding between the Members of the Environmental Pillar, Ireland

This Memorandum of Understanding or MOU is designed to establish a clear understanding of how the Environmental Pillar will practically function and the roles, rights and responsibilities of each Member Organisation of the Environmental Pillar. The following Environmental Organisations agree to be bound by this Memorandum of Understanding. Agreement to be bound by this Memorandum shall be a condition of entry into the Environmental Pillar.

An Taisce	Irish Cycling Campaign
Bat Conservation Ireland	Irish Peatland Conservation Council
BirdWatch Ireland	Irish Seed Savers Association
CELT	Irish Whale & Dolphin Group
Coastwatch	Irish Wildlife Trust
Coomhola Salmon Trust	Leave No Trace Ireland
Eco-Advocacy	Native Woodland Trust
ECO-UNESCO	The Organic Centre
The Environmental Forum	Pocket Forests
FEASTA	The Rediscovery Centre Ireland
Forest Friends	Sonairte
Friends of the Earth	Sustainable Cooperative Ireland
Global Action Plan Ireland	Sustainable Projects Ireland
Good Energies Alliance Ireland	Talamh Beo
Green Economy Foundation	Vincent Wildlife Trust
Green Foundation Ireland	VOICE
Grow It Yourself	Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland
Hedgerows Ireland	Zero Waste Alliance Ireland

1. Date of Commencement

This revised Memorandum of Understanding will come into effect from 23 June 2023.

2. Review of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Members of the Environmental Pillar

This Memorandum of Understanding will be subject to a review by the Member Organisations at least within a year of the pillar being established, and then tabled for review every two years or as deemed necessary. The Pillar Plenary is empowered to agree revisions to the Memorandum Of Understanding and these revisions become binding upon Member Organisations with immediate effect, unless otherwise agreed.

3. Structure of the Pillar

The Environment Pillar will be made up of one Social Partner named “The Environmental Pillar”. The Irish Environmental Network will arrange the funding for and provision of a Secretariat and other resources for the Environmental Pillar and will appoint a Coordinator and, as appropriate, staff, for the Environmental Pillar. The Coordinator will facilitate the activities of the Environmental Pillar.

4. The Membership of the Environmental Pillar

4.1 Membership of the Environmental Pillar shall be restricted to full members of the Irish Environmental Network (IEN) in good standing. All new members of the Environmental Pillar must be ratified by the Plenary. Returning members shall reaffirm their membership of the Pillar annually by returning this signed

Memorandum of Understanding.

Definitions

4.1.1 The organisations that have signed the Memorandum Of Understanding and thus make up the body of the Environmental Pillar will be known as the Member Organisations.

4.1.2 Member Organisations are represented at Pillar meetings by Member Representatives. How Member Organisations select their Member Representatives is an internal matter for the Member Organisations.

4.1.3 All Member Organisations and their representatives are bound by the IEN Grievance Procedures, including the IEN Code of Conduct, when participating in Environmental Pillar processes, and when representing the Pillar externally.

4.2 New Members of the Environmental Pillar

4.2.1 Applications to become a Member should be made on the official application form, which is made available by the Environmental Pillar Secretariat. A group must be a full member of the IEN in good standing in order to be considered for membership to the Environmental Pillar.

4.2.2 On signing the MOU and becoming a member, organisations are accepting that the Pillar's current objectives, campaign priorities and policy positions are as set out in any agreed strategy documents, workplan, or policy documents. Members are encouraged to participate in the Pillar's planning and policy development processes as they become active in the Pillar.

4.2.3 The Membership Process

Application forms to join the Pillar are to be completed and sent to the Coordinator, who will share them with the Steering Committee for review. The Steering Committee will consider the application and make a recommendation to the Environmental Pillar Plenary as to the admissibility of any application. The final decision on admission of new applicants will be made at the next scheduled Plenary meeting of the Environmental Pillar.

4.2.4 The Coordinator will communicate the decision of the Plenary meeting of the Environmental Pillar in writing to the candidate organisation within 16 weeks of receipt of the application. In circumstances where this is not possible within 16 weeks, the applicant will be notified and advised of a date when the decision will be made.

4.2.5 A candidate organisation whose application has been rejected may then appeal in writing against the decision to the Coordinator. This appeal will then be considered at the Pillar Plenary meeting following from the date of the appeal. In circumstances where this is not possible, the applicant will be notified and advised of the date when the appeal will be considered.

4.2.6 The Pillar Plenary will consider the appeal of the candidate organisation, and then the Member Representatives will vote on the acceptance of the application. A minimum of a 2/3 majority of those attending the Plenary will be required to overturn its previous decision regarding a membership application.

4.2.7 The Coordinator will communicate the decision of the Pillar Plenary in writing to the candidate organisation within 2 working weeks of the appeal hearing.

4.2.8 The Department of the Taoiseach will be notified of any proposed changes to the membership of the Pillar.

4.2.9 No organisation can re-apply within two years following an unsuccessful application process..

5. Governance of the Pillar

5.1 Meetings of the Pillar

5.1.1 Definitions

Each Member Organisation will select two people to represent them on the Pillar. One of these people will be deemed to be the main Representative and the other deemed to be the Alternate. They will collectively be known as Member Representatives, but if clarification is required they will be individually known as the Main Member Representative and the Alternate Member Representative.

5.1.2 Member Representatives shall meet regularly to direct the activities of the Pillar and in order to prepare for and respond to: the Council meetings of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC); and the activities of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).

5.1.3 All Member Representatives shall have the right to attend meetings of the Pillar. It is expected that all the Member Organisations will be represented by their Member Representatives at Pillar plenary meetings.

5.1.4 Where there are barriers to participation in Pillar meetings such as timing and location of meetings, then the Secretariat will make every effort to identify and remove those barriers. Where a Member Organisation is not represented at a Pillar plenary, because neither of the Member Representatives is able to attend in person, they should, wherever possible, be enabled to participate in meetings using audio or audio-visual tools.

5.1.5 A Plenary Meeting of the Pillar shall be deemed a valid meeting if 35% of the Member Organisations are represented and also only if 4 of those present are members of the Environmental Pillar Steering Committee.

5.1.6 The Environmental Pillar Steering Committee acts to promote the decisions of the Pillar Plenary and shall consist of 8 members.

5.1.7 A Quorum for meetings of the Steering Committee is 3.

5.1.8 The structure, function and roles of the Steering Committee is as laid out in Appendix II.

5.2 Chairing Pillar Meetings

5.2.1 Chairing meetings of the Pillar will be a shared responsibility among Member Representatives. At each meeting of the Pillar Plenary, Member Representatives will appoint the meeting Chair for the subsequent plenary meeting.

5.3 Mechanisms to elect Representatives to the Environmental Pillar Steering Committee, and external bodies including the NESC Council, the EESC and other external bodies.

5.3.1 Definitions

Nominees to positions on external bodies will be selected by election to represent as a main representative or, as appropriate, to act as an alternate representative. They will be known as the: “The Elected Representative on the (name of body concerned)”, or the “Alternate Elected Representative on the (name of body concerned)”.

5.3.2 Nominees to the Steering Committee and external bodies will be selected by means of a simple preferendum. A simple preferendum is one where you vote 1,2,3, etc. in order of your choice and your first choice gets X points where X is the number of candidates in the election, and your 2nd choice gets X-1 points et cetera. There is no restriction to the number of nominations a Member Organisation can make to any elected position.

5.3.3 Member Organisations can nominate the same person to multiple positions, and Member Representatives are allowed to hold multiple elected positions

5.3.4 Member Organisations will be given at least one week within which to consider making a nomination.

5.3.6 Each candidate for any Elected Representative or Alternate Representative position shall make a full, written disclosure of interests, such as relationships, work done, and posts held, that could result in a conflict of interest. Each staff member shall make such a disclosure on appointment. This written disclosure shall be kept on file and shall be updated as appropriate.

5.3.7 When an Elected Representative or Alternate Representative updates their disclosure of interests due to a change in circumstances, the Steering Committee shall consider that updated disclosure. If they consider that the change in circumstances changes the likelihood or risk of conflicts of interest significantly from the previous circumstances, they shall call a new election for any position that person holds.

5.3.8 Each Member Organisation has one vote in each election.

5.3.9 The period allocated for voting must be at least one week.

5.3.10 The timing of elections to the external bodies will follow the cycle laid down by the relevant body. The exception to this will be the election to select the members of the Steering Committee, which will take place annually.

5.3.11 Elections to all external positions will be reviewed internally by the Pillar at least every 24 months.

5.3.12 Where short notice is given within which a nomination has to be made to an external body, then a person may be put forward by the Steering Committee as an interim nominee, pending an election for an Elected Representative under the rules above.

5.3.13 In the case of elections for the NESC Council, the Plenary of the Environmental Pillar will decide prior to each election, whether or not to appoint the Environmental Pillar Coordinator as one of the Representatives. If appointed, the Environmental Pillar Coordinator shall be bound by the same MOU that all the Elected Representatives are required to sign before taking up their elected positions.

5.3.14 Elected Representatives shall be answerable to and guided by the Pillar Plenary.

5.3.15 Persons acting as Elected Representatives must advocate on behalf of the whole Pillar

membership, when engaged with the bodies to which they have been nominated by the Pillar.

5.3.16 Elected Representatives are responsible for providing written reports of all meetings attended in this role. The secretariat will be responsible for the dissemination of the reports.

6 Working Procedures and Guidelines

6.1 Within the limits of available resources, Member Representatives will strive, as far as possible to:

6.1.1 Attend and participate in Pillar plenary meetings

6.1.2 Register apologies to the secretariat if unable to attend

6.1.3 Participate on work groups as needed

6.1.4 When working within the Pillar try to work collaboratively in the interests of the Pillar as a whole.

6.1.5 Advocate on behalf of the whole Pillar in accordance with the MOU

6.1.6 Complete tasks undertaken by them within the time allotted

6.1.7 Respond to emails requesting feedback/input in the time span requested.

6.2 Guidelines re Decision-making

6.2.1 Mutual respect for individual Member Organisations' cultures and structures

6.2.2 Every Member Organisation agrees to balance individual/organisational rights with the merits of co-operation and compromise.

6.2.3 Member Organisations agree that individual rights exist in a context of coalition building – we benefit most when we engage collectively.

6.2.4 In order to foster open and creative discussion all internal communications within the Pillar are confidential, unless the Member Organisations agree otherwise.

6.2.5 A Member Organisation choosing to progress a controversial agenda item acknowledges that this decision may affect levels of solidarity.

6.2.6 The Pillar should operate as much as possible without voting – using consensus, with the understanding that a consensual approach does not necessarily imply unanimity.

6.2.7 If a Member Organisation considers that an agenda item is impacting on the capacity of the Pillar to conduct its business, this issue will be named.

6.2.8 Problem solving could consist of:

6.2.8.1 Bilaterals

6.2.8.2 Drop agenda item

6.2.8.3 Pursue issue elsewhere

6.2.8.4 Agree that it does not impact negatively

6.2.8.5 Refocus

6.2.8.6 Go ahead with a majority view

6.2.9 A Member Organisation is free to progress an issue outside the Pillar structure/process and is asked to bear that in mind in terms of enabling the overall effectiveness of the Pillar.

6.2.10 If decisions are required between meetings:

6.2.10.1 The secretariat will contact the Member Representatives by email and outline a suggested way forward plus a time-span for responses from Member Organisations.

6.2.10.2 Each Member Representative is free to comment before the deadline and input to the decision-making process.

A gradient of responses will be used to track respondents' comments/views as follows:

To be adopted, a proposal needs at least 10 Member Organisations to vote in its favour (levels 1,2 or 3). This number must be greater than those voting 5,6, 7 or 8. The right to veto is expressed by returning a 9. Votes at the 4 level (abstain) don't count either way and groups that don't vote are counted as a 4.

	Gradient of Agreement	What it means
1	Endorsement	"I like it"
2	Endorsement with minor reservations	"Basically, I like it"
3	Agreement with reservations	"I can live with it"
4	Abstain (includes no vote cast)	"I have no opinion or I don't mind. I'm ok with the rest of the group making this decision for the Pillar"
5	Unconvinced	"I don't have a strong opinion but I'm not voting to adopt the proposal"
6	Stand Aside	"I don't like this much, but I'm not formally disagreeing. If there's a majority for it then let's go ahead"
7	Formal Disagreement but willing to go with majority	"I want my disagreement noted in writing but I'll support a majority decision"
8	Formal Disagreement with request to be absolved of responsibility for implementation	"I want my disagreement noted in writing and I don't want to be involved in implementing it"
9	Block	"I veto this proposal"

6.2.10.3 A veto must be supported by an explanatory statement, and a Member Organisation should make every effort to achieve consensus where possible. To this end, a Member Organisation intending to use the Veto should contact the Coordinator at the earliest opportunity to see if a satisfactory compromise can be

reached.

6.2.10.4 If a Member Organisation chooses to use the veto it means that the decision is postponed until the next Pillar Plenary meeting.

6.2.10.5 In the case where a decision is absolutely necessary before the next Pillar Plenary meeting, the secretariat will gather the above responses and progress accordingly, using the agreed 'problem solving' techniques as outlined in 6.2.7 above.

6.3 Pillar Meetings

6.3.1 The Pillar work processes are advanced primarily through the mechanism of regular Pillar meetings. The two regularly occurring forms of meeting will be meetings of the full Pillar in Plenary and meetings of the Pillar Steering Committee.

6.3.2 The meeting attendees agree an agenda at the start of each meeting, and the Chair is empowered to work within the agreed time schedule and agenda. Member Representatives can add items to the agenda under 'AOB.'

6.3.3 The meeting attendees agree to abide by the process as determined by the Chairperson.

6.3.4 The Pillar Coordinator will circulate the proposed meeting agenda, with supporting documentation, to the Member Representatives at least 7 days in advance of the meeting date.

6.3.5 The Minutes are taken by the Secretariat and distributed, along with all relevant documents, to the Member Representatives, as soon as possible after the meeting.

6.3.6 It is the responsibility of the Member Representatives to ensure that the minutes of Pillar meetings, along with all relevant documents, are distributed to the membership of the Member Organisation that they represent.

6.3.7 A meeting called in addition to the monthly meeting is called an Extraordinary Plenary. This is for exceptional circumstances only.

6.3.7.1 To call an Extraordinary Plenary meeting, a Member Organisation must get the support of two other Member Organisations, and inform the Coordinator at the earliest opportunity of their intention.

6.3.7.2 All Member Organisations shall be given notice of an Extraordinary Plenary meeting by text and by email.

6.3.7.3 There is no minimum notice for such a meeting being called. However, all efforts must be made to maximise the period between calling the meeting and the meeting taking place.

6.3.7.4 Any Member Organisation calling for an Extraordinary Plenary must give full reasons why the meeting is being called, why the issue cannot wait for the ordinary Plenary, a precise agenda and a full explanation of what the intended outcome is.

6.3.7.5 The Member Organisation calling for an Extraordinary Plenary shall:

6.3.7.5.1 At the earliest possible moment, send out an alerting text and an email giving full reasons why the meeting is being called, why the issue cannot wait for the bi-monthly plenary, a precise agenda and a full explanation of what the intended outcome is with specific reference as to the need for short notice.

6.3.7.5.2 Take feedback from other groups with regard to the need for and content and timing of the proposed Extraordinary Plenary meeting.

6.3.7.5.3 The decisions or other outcomes from the Extraordinary Plenary meeting are automatically reported and evaluated at the next ordinary Plenary.

6.4 NESC Meetings

It shall be the responsibility of the Environmental Pillar Coordinator and the Secretariat to ensure that reports of, and notifications for, these meetings, together with associated documents, are distributed to the Member Representatives as expeditiously as possible.

6.5 Action Groups and Advocacy Hubs

The Pillar can form or designate Action Groups to work on specific issues. Membership is voluntary, and all Action Groups are advisory in nature unless specifically stated otherwise. The Pillar Plenary is to agree at the outset what kind of authorisation is given to the Action Groups and what kind of 'reporting back' mechanisms it wishes if any more than just updates at the next Pillar meeting.

Work of the Pillar is also supported and facilitated through Advocacy Hubs, which are convened and administered by the Secretariat on behalf the membership.

6.6 The Wider Environmental Community

The Environmental Pillar strives to consult with the wider environmental community and collaborate where it adds value and impact.

6.7 Creating Programmes of Work, Pillar Policies or other Documents for Publication

6.7.1 The Pillar Plenary may initiate a particular policy development process which will continue as in 6.7.7 and 6.7.8 below

6.7.2 Alternatively, at any time, a Member Organisation that wishes to create a policy document must get the support of two other Member Organisations to trigger policy creation.

6.7.3 The proposal for the creation of a policy document must include an outline of the proposed policy together with the rationale for the proposal. These three Member organisations must therefore be in agreement about the need for the creation of the new policy.

6.7.4 The three Member Organisations must inform the membership of the policy creation process that has been initiated, including all the information listed in 6.7.3 above.

6.7.5 Once the three Member Organisations agree on the substance of the policy proposal, the Secretariat will facilitate the process taking input from all interested member organisations until the document is deemed to be in a state ready for voting.

6.7.6 Alternatively, an Action Group or Advocacy Hub of the Pillar may develop an action package and ask the Pillar to ratify this action package by means of the process established under 6.7.7 and 6.7.8 below. This action package shall include a rationale, and a short briefing document which must at least include a statement of the policy being promoted, a list of objectives to be achieved and a description of the strategy to be used to achieve these objectives. Should the action package of work be ratified by the Pillar, then the Action Group concerned is authorised to carry out the agreed action package on behalf of the Pillar. The Pillar Plenary may at any time, in accordance with the standard voting methodology for Pillar decisions contained in 6.2 above, remove this authorisation. The right to veto contained in 6.2.10.2 does not apply to a Plenary decision rescinding the authorisation for an agreed action package.

6.7.7 This process will be a two-stage process in which comments are sought on the initial proposal, a first draft revised policy is drawn up by arrangement between the proposer and the coordinator, and this is circulated to the Member Organisations for final comment before the final draft is voted upon. Where necessary further drafts may be circulated for comment prior to voting.

6.7.8 The Voting Process will follow as described in 6.2.10.2 above.

6.7.9 All documents or press releases published by the Environmental Pillar must carry the caveat:

“This (submission/policy document/press release etc.) was developed using the Environmental Pillar processes but is not necessarily the policy of each member group in the Pillar.”

6.8 Reviewing Pillar Policy

Policy documents can be reviewed at any time but will be systematically reviewed on a 2-year basis. The processes are as follows:

6.8.1 In the case of a biennial systematic review, and at the appropriate time, the Secretariat will bring the opportunity for a review to the attention of the Member Representatives.

6.8.2 At any time a Member Organisation that wishes to change a policy document must get the support of two other Member Organisations to trigger a review.

6.8.3 The request for review must clearly state the sections of the policy document that are to be reviewed and include the changes that are proposed, together with the rationale for these changes. These three Member Organisations must therefore be in agreement about the changes that they wish to see.

6.8.4 The three Member Organisations must inform the membership of the Pillar of the review that has been initiated, including all the information listed in 6.8.3 above.

6.8.5 Once the three Member Organisations are in agreement on the substance of the request for review, the secretariat will facilitate a review process taking input from all interested Member Organisations until the revised document is deemed to be in a state ready for voting.

6.8.6 This process will be a two-stage process in which comments are sought on the initial proposal, a draft revised policy is drawn up by the coordinator, and this is circulated to the Member Organisations for final comment before the final draft is voted upon. Where necessary, further drafts may be circulated for comment prior to voting.

6.8.7 The Voting Process will follow as described in 6.2.10.2 above.

6.8.8 Until such time that the review process is complete, the existing policy remains in place.

6.9 Conflict Resolution

Where there is a matter that cannot be resolved within the context of the ordinary meetings of the Environmental Pillar, the following procedures will be followed and every effort should be made to resolve the issue as soon as possible:

6.9.1 The relevant person(s) and the Pillar Coordinator will meet to try and resolve it.

6.9.2 If this is not successful the relevant person(s) and the Pillar Coordinator will meet with the chief

executive or other appropriate person of the Representative(s) Member Organisation

6.9.3 If this does not resolve the matter, the relevant person(s), the Pillar Coordinator and the appropriate person(s) from the Member Organisation(s) will meet with an agreed independent mediator from the register of either Mediation Forum Ireland or the Mediation Institute of Ireland.

6.9.4 If this does not resolve the matter it will be referred to the Pillar Plenary, with the mediator in attendance. If either or both parties require it, an external facilitator will be provided. An agreement is to be reached and if necessary a vote called with the requirement for a 2/3 or greater majority.

7.0 Expulsion of members

7.1 A Member Organisation may be expelled from the Environmental Pillar by resolution of two thirds of its Member Organisations determines that the member should be expelled on the grounds that -

7.1.1 the Member Organisation has failed to discharge the member's obligations to the Environmental Pillar

7.1.2 the Member Organisation has acted in a manner that has -

7.1.2.1 prevented or hindered the Environmental Pillar in carrying out any of its primary activities or promoting its agreed policies; or

7.1.2.2 brought the Environmental Pillar into disrepute; or

7.1.2.3 the Member Organisation has acted in a manner contrary to the interests of the Environmental Pillar and in so acting caused, or has the potential to cause, the Environmental Pillar harm.

7.1 A proposal to expel a Member Organisation must be supported by three Member Organisations.

7.2 The proposal, together with the reasoned arguments, must be sent to the Coordinator.

7.3 The Coordinator will then notify the Member Organisation that is subject of the proposed resolution, and arrange for the resolution to be discussed at a Plenary.

7.4 The said Member Organisation must be given at least 28 days written notice of the proposed resolution and of the date, time and place of the Plenary meeting at which the resolution will be discussed.

7.3 The procedure at the Plenary to consider the proposed resolution is as follows –

7.3.1 the Member Organisation must be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard at the meeting;

7.3.2 if the Member Organisation fails, without reasonable excuse, to attend at the time and place of which notice has been given, the Plenary Meeting may consider the matter in the absence of the member;

7.4 The Plenary Meeting will be followed by a 5 working day period of reflection 7.7 A secret ballot by email will then ensue over the next 5 days.

8. Conflicts of Interest

8.0 The purpose of this section is to protect the integrity of the Environmental Pillar, to enable others to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and

Environmental Pillar Representatives. It is meant to supplement good judgment, and all involved in the Pillar should respect its spirit as well as its wording.

8.1 All those involved in the Environmental Pillar, including Elected Representatives, Convenors of Action Groups, Advocacy Hubs, joint projects and staff, shall strive to avoid any conflict between the interests of the Environmental Pillar on the one hand, and, for example, personal, professional, political and business interests on the other.

8.2. Each Member Representative must declare prior to its discussion any conflict of interest on a matter to be decided on at an Environmental Pillar meeting. Unless those present at the meeting decide otherwise, they must leave when the matter is being discussed. The person concerned should be told what decision was reached. Conflicts of interest must be recorded in the minutes.

8.3. Those involved in the Environmental Pillar must use their position in the Pillar, and any information they come by due to their involvement, to advance the purposes of the Pillar and the Pillar itself and not for incompatible or competing purposes.

9. Agreement to the Memorandum of Understanding

As authorised by the environmental non-governmental organisation we represent, and whose name and address is inscribed below, we agree to act according to this Memorandum of Understanding between the Members of the Environmental Pillar as revised in March 2023.

Signed:.....

Signed:.....

Organisation:.....

Date:.....

Appendix I

Criteria for Membership of the Irish Environmental Network

1. The primary objectives and activities of the organisation must be environmental (i.e. ecological) protection and / or environmental sustainability. This must be reflected in the primary (main) Objects Clause of the organisation's Memorandum of Association or, Constitution.
Acceptable areas for environmental objects include:
 - Permanent protection of wildlife/habitats
 - General or Species specific care protection/rescue/rehabilitation/reintroduction
 - Environmental or environmental sustainability education (formal and Informal)
 - Environmental protection
 - Marine protection
 - Organic horticulture or education
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Resource efficiency and recycling
 - Invasive alien species prevention/removal
 - Anthropogenic climate change
 - Environmental Law
 - Environmental action
2. The organisation must be a registered company or be a registered friendly society with a registered constitution. The organisation must have been incorporated for a period of at least 12 months prior to an application for membership.
3. The organisation must be a not for profit organisation.
4. The organisation must be registered with The Charities Regulatory Authority.
5. The organisation must have a demonstrable national remit. Qualifying characteristics include: national influence; specialist activity covering the country; convincing geographic spread of active membership; outreach activity.
6. The organisation must provide financial statements in line with the Charities Regulatory Authority's requirements for an organisations of a similar size and type. The organisation must also be able to produce a valid and current tax clearance reference number, or official exemption. (for template/requirements see www.CRA.ie)
7. The organisation must be able to demonstrate a substantial level of activity in promoting its aims and objectives over a period of at least 18 months prior to application for membership.
8. The organisation must have an up to date website and an active social media presence.
9. The organisation must demonstrate what unique contribution it can bring to the Network.
10. The organisation must be an independent and legally discrete body, not a subgroup or activity of another organisation, nor an organisation managing a project with a limited life span. Networks of organisations are not admitted to membership.
11. The board of the organisation should not share more than fifty percent of its directors with another organisation.

12. No organisation whose executive board contains a representative or representative appointed by any government Department or Local Authority shall be admitted to membership. However, this does not exclude individuals from sitting on the board in a personal capacity.
13. The organisation must agree to follow the Code of Conduct for IEN Members.

Appendix II

The Environmental Pillar Steering Committee

Membership:

The Steering Committee is made up of 8 persons. The hierarchy of first person elected down to the last is the principle on which committee members will be selected for high level meetings with government and other bodies.

Elections:

The members of the Steering Committee are elected annually in July.

Role:

The Plenary is the ruling body of the Environmental Pillar. The Plenary meets 5 scheduled times a year and also makes decisions outside of this by email voting. The role of the Steering Committee is:

- To ensure the decisions of the Plenary are carried out between plenary meetings
- To develop detailed proposals based on instructions from the Plenary
- To oversee the work of the Secretariat between Plenaries
- To decide on agenda and participants for meetings with Ministers and other significant persons or bodies, using the agreed protocol below
- To publish its reasons and process for the decisions regarding participants in meetings with Ministers and other significant persons or bodies
- To review and support the work of Pillar representatives on various bodies including the NESC and the EESC between Plenaries
- To review and support the delivery of the Working Groups work plans
- To review and approve press releases from the Pillar
- To make proposals to the Plenary

Meetings:

The Steering Committee meets at least 5 times a year in the periods between Plenaries and in the week of the NESC meetings. Other meetings may be called as necessary. The Chair for each meeting is elected at the start of the meeting and in general rotates between the Committee members.

The draft minutes of each meeting will be circulated to all Member Organisations as soon as possible after each meeting, and will be reviewed formally at the next Plenary. A quorum for Steering Committee is 3.

Attendance:

All members of the Steering Committee should make every reasonable attempt to attend meetings.

If a member misses more than two consecutive meetings without explanation the member will be deemed to have resigned. Each year attendance records of members will be circulated before the elections.

Protocol for agreeing Agenda and Attendees for meetings with Ministers, external bodies etc:

1. Once a meeting is arranged, the Coordinator will circulate the agenda spreadsheet matrix, together with this protocol and ask Member Organisations to identify the questions to be asked on the basis of agreed Pillar Policy or agreed Work Packages or Action Plans, filling in the responses to the headings a-j below.

Wherever possible, at least 5 days should be allowed for responses.

- a. Subject
- b. Person responsible for question or ask
- c. Member Organisation
- d. Question or ask of Minister/Person Concerned
- e. What is your objective in asking the question?
- f. Why is this the appropriate place to ask the question?
- g. What previous preparation work has been done with officials?
- h. What is your follow up strategy?
- i. Is it a Pillar Policy, if so reference same?
- j. Is the proposed agenda item part of a Working Group work plan or an Action Plan, if so reference same?

2. The Coordinator will collate the responses and propose a draft agenda and list of attendees to the Steering Committee based on same.

3. The Steering Committee will review and discuss the proposed agenda. The Steering Committee will finalise the agenda, taking into account: time limitations of the meeting; timeliness and strategic prioritisation; and whether agenda items have raised with department officials beforehand. The final agenda will be circulated to Member Organisations and uploaded to the Shared Drive

4. The Coordinator will then forward the agreed agenda to the relevant body.

5. If an unexpected issue arises between the agreeing of the agenda and the meeting concerned, and a Member Organisation requests its inclusion, then the Coordinator will forward this to the Steering Committee for their decision on whether it should be added to the agenda, using the criteria listed above

6. The Member organisation must in all cases fill in the matrix.

Appendix III

Rio Declaration on Environment and Development

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Having met at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992,

Reaffirming the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm on 16 June 1972, and seeking to build upon it,

With the goal of establishing a new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among States, key sectors of societies and people,

Working towards international agreements which respect the interests of all and protect the integrity of the global environmental and developmental system,

Recognizing the integral and interdependent nature of the Earth, our home,

Proclaims that:

Principle 1

Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

Principle 2

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

Principle 3

The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations.

Principle 4

In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it.

Principle 5

All States and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world.

Principle 6

The special situation and needs of developing countries, particularly the least developed and those most environmentally vulnerable, shall be given special priority. International actions in the field of environment and development should also address the interests and needs of all countries.

Principle 7

States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit to sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.

Principle 8

To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies.

Principle 9

States should cooperate to strengthen endogenous capacity-building for sustainable development by improving scientific understanding through exchanges of scientific and technological knowledge, and by enhancing the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of technologies, including new and innovative technologies.

Principle 10

Environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.

Principle 11

States shall enact effective environmental legislation. Environmental standards, management objectives and priorities should reflect the environmental and development context to which they apply. Standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate and of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries, in particular developing countries.

Principle 12

States should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, to better address the problems of environmental degradation.

Trade policy measures for environmental purposes should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade. Unilateral actions to deal with environmental challenges outside the jurisdiction of the importing country should be avoided. Environmental measures addressing transboundary or global environmental problems should, as far as possible, be based on an international consensus.

Principle 13

States shall develop national law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage. States shall also cooperate in an expeditious and more determined manner to develop further international law regarding liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage caused by activities within their jurisdiction or control to areas beyond their jurisdiction.

Principle 14

States should effectively cooperate to discourage or prevent the relocation and transfer to other States of any activities and substances that cause severe environmental degradation or are found to be harmful to human health.

Principle 15

In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

Principle 16

National authorities should endeavour to promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment.

Principle 17

Environmental impact assessment, as a national instrument, shall be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority.

Principle 18

States shall immediately notify other States of any natural disasters or other emergencies that are likely to produce sudden harmful effects on the environment of those States. Every effort shall be made by the international community to help States so afflicted.

Principle 19

States shall provide prior and timely notification and relevant information to potentially affected

States on activities that may have a significant adverse transboundary environmental effect and shall consult with those States at an early stage and in good faith.

Principle 20

Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development.

Principle 21

The creativity, ideals and courage of the youth of the world should be mobilized to forge a global partnership in order to achieve sustainable development and ensure a better future for all.

Principle 22

Indigenous people and their communities and other local communities have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and interests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development.

Principle 23

The environment and natural resources of people under oppression, domination and occupation shall be protected.

Principle 24

Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development. States shall therefore respect international law providing protection for the environment in times of armed conflict and cooperate in its further development, as necessary.

Principle 25

Peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent and indivisible. Principle

Principle 26

States shall resolve all their environmental disputes peacefully and by appropriate means in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Principle 27

States and people shall cooperate in good faith and in a spirit of partnership in the fulfilment of the principles embodied in this Declaration and in the further development of international law in the field of sustainable development.