

Tracking Change...

Tracking Change... Local and Traditional Knowledge
in Watershed Governance

Terms of Reference for Project Governance

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These Terms of Reference summarize the mission, purpose, objectives, guiding principles and governance structure of the SSHRC Partnership project

Tracking Change: The Role of Local and Traditional Knowledge in Watershed Governance. These Terms of Reference specifically are intended to guide the Project Team in carrying out the work defined in the SSHRC approved proposal (2015) and in accordance with the Tracking Change Research Partnership Agreement (Appendix B).

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Tracking Change Project Team, Tracking Change Management Committee and the Tracking Change Executive Committee is to work together to facilitate the creation, documentation and sharing of Local and Traditional Knowledge about social-ecological change in the Mackenzie, Lower Amazon, and Lower Mekong river basins in ways that can contribute to improved sustainability of these important fresh water ecosystems and the communities that depend on them for their current and future livelihood and well-being.

Objectives of the Project:

Partnership Objectives:

- (i) Build a multi-scale, multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural network for social science research that is meaningful locally and globally;
- (ii) Build research capacity in the Mackenzie, Mekong and Amazon Basins;
- (iii) Build global partnerships for mobilizing knowledge relevant to the governance of the Mackenzie River Basin; and,
- (iv) Foster global collaboration and knowledge sharing on common issues of watershed governance.

Thematic Objectives:

Develop and facilitate knowledge sharing related to the Mackenzie River Basin, the Lower Amazon Basin and the Lower Mekong Basin on the following themes:

- i) Sustainability of River Fisheries and Fishing Livelihoods;
- ii) Meaning and Well-being;
- iii) Watershed Governance.

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Legacy Objectives

The project will aim to create a legacy of materials and processes (knowledge and practices) for community involvement and Local and Traditional knowledge in the monitoring and management of social-ecological change in the Mackenzie, Amazon and Mekong rivers as well as other freshwater ecosystems globally.

Guiding Principles of Collaboration:

- (I) Collaborate to achieve the objectives of the proposed SSHRC Partnership project, “Tracking Change: Local and Traditional Knowledge in Watershed Governance”;
- (II) Commitment to participate in the Partnership with interest in contributing to the long-term sustainability of the Mackenzie River Basin, the Lower Mekong and the Lower Amazonian Basin and the livelihoods and well-being of current and future generations;
- (III) Respect for the socio-cultural diversity of all members of the Partnership;
- (IV) Respect for and commitment to consideration of input of all Partner Organizations and Project Team members into decisions made by the Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRRB) Traditional Knowledge and Strengthening Partnerships Committee (TKSPC) in respect of the Partnership (See Terms of Reference for Advising the TKSPC);
- (V) Respect for any relevant policies and legal requirements related to research licensing and research ethics including those of Canadian Tri-Council, the University of Alberta, the Government of the Yukon and Government of the Northwest Territories;
- (VI) Respect for principles of culturally appropriate and meaningful research with Aboriginal partners including: broad recognition of the value of local and traditional knowledge, broad respect for local and regional protocols for working with LTK holders, and honouring of communities and regional government/organization decisions about the documentation, use and long term storage of LTK in respect of their communities and regions¹.
- (VII) Agree to carry out work related to the partnership according to the proposal and in a manner that does not contradict the terms or conditions of the funding agency’s agreement on the use of the funds.
- (VIII) Respect of Intellectual Property Rights and Academic Confidentiality²

¹ *Prior to the development of any sub-project, partner organizations, communities and academic researchers are encouraged to develop an agreement about ownership, control, access and possession of the data (OCAP) to clarify details of how knowledge will be collected, stored, interpreted and shared by them and other Project Team members.*

² *Project Team members involved in the project agree to respect each other and the knowledge created through the project in a manner that is consistent with Tri-Council Guidelines and that is professional and culturally appropriate. It is the responsibility of the Project Team member to highlight any data, issues, or discussions that should remain confidential. Barring instances of illegality, it is the responsibility of other members of the Project Team to respect the confidentiality of others. In instances where there is ambiguity it is assumed that any information, project results or discussions shared among Project Team members is confidential.*

Disputes and Conflict Resolution

Liability and Indemnification: Team members are responsible for their negligent acts or omissions and the negligent acts or omissions of its servants and agents. No Team member shall be liable to another for indirect or consequential damages.

Disputes: The Parties shall attempt to resolve any dispute, controversies, and claims amicably through good faith negotiations. Any disputes, controversies, and claims with respect to the Project, should be submitted in writing to the Principal Investigator. Should the Principal Investigator be unable to resolve the dispute, the issue will be brought to the Executive Committee and recommendations made to the parties of the dispute or affected parties. Project Team members who do not respect the intellectual property rights of other Project Team members or who communicate and conduct themselves in ways that are inconsistent with the *Guiding Principles of Collaboration* may be required to withdraw from the Partnership at the discretion of the Principal Investigator and Executive Committee.

Governance Structure and Decision Making Process

1. The Tracking Change project is a partnership led and administered at the University of Alberta in partnership with multiple community, government, university partners as well as academics and students living and working in the Mackenzie, Lower Mekong and Lower Amazon Basins (See Appendix B);
 - The **Project Team** includes all Partner Organizations³, Academic Co-applicants, Collaborators, Students and Community Researchers;
 - The **Project Management Committee** includes the members of the Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRRB) Traditional Knowledge and Strengthening Partnerships Committee (TKSPC), a representative of the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Academic Leads for each of the Mackenzie (Parlee), Mekong (Baird) and Amazon (Silvano) and the Academic Leads for the Sub-Basins of the Mackenzie (Lantz, Natcher, Napoleon, Jobin, Parlee, Wesche);

³ *Aboriginal organization partners of the Tracking Change project are those Aboriginal governments, organizations and co-management boards who provided a letter of support for the funding application to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (2014) including acknowledgement of the Principles of Partnership. Other Aboriginal organizations can be added as partners by i) by being nominated by an existing Partner or member of the MRRB Traditional Knowledge and Strengthening Partnerships Committee, and ii) becoming a signatory to the **Guiding Principles of Collaboration**.*

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- The **Executive Committee** includes an Aboriginal member of the Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRRB) Traditional Knowledge and Strengthening Partnerships Committee (TKSPC), the Principal Investigator (Parlee), a sub-basin academic lead (co-applicant) from another Canadian University, and a representative from Water Resources Division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Government of the Northwest Territories.
 - The representative of the TKSPC and the sub-basin academic lead (i.e., co-applicant from another Canadian University) will be determined by nomination and a 2/3 majority vote of the Project Management Committee. Alternates for these individuals will be named by the same process;
 - The representative of the TKSPC and the academic lead (i.e., co-applicant from another university) will rotate on an annual basis (i.e., a different person each year).
 - If the Principal Investigator is on leave or must withdraw from the project (e.g., due to illness etc.), a co-applicant will be named by the University of Alberta to perform in an administrative role for the lead institution; the Management Committee shall nominate and determine, by 2/3 vote, an alternative academic lead from among the Canadian university co-applicants, to perform as the intellectual lead for the project.
 - If a sub-basin academic lead (co-applicant) can no longer serve in this capacity, an alternative academic (e.g., co-applicant from the project) may be nominated with acceptance being determined by a 2/3 vote of the management committee. If the nominated individual is not already a co-applicant, procedures must be followed to request they be formally added as a member of the Project Team.
- 2. The Tracking Change Management Committee and the Executive Committee will seek input in its decisions from other members of the Project Team including:
 - Partner Organizations (e.g., Aboriginal organizations)
 - Senior Advisory Committee (Berkes, Huntington, Nuttall)
 - Senior Aboriginal Advisory Committee (TBA)
 - Technical Advisory Committee (TBA)
- 3. The Tracking Change Management Committee shall make best efforts to ensure equitable involvement of all members of the Project Team;
- 4. Decision making in meetings will be guided by a consensus process. If consensus cannot be reached, the TCMC members will have voting privileges, with a two-thirds majority needed for agreement.

For More information see:

www.trackingchange.ca