



# Terms of Reference

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# 1. Purpose

**Coalition2030** is an alliance of civil society organisations committed to and working towards upholding **Ireland's commitment** to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at home in Ireland and internationally by 2030.

It comprises international and domestic civil society organisations, including environmental, anti-poverty and social inclusion groups, academics, and Trade Unions- whose expertise ranges from children and youth rights to environmental sustainability and from humanitarian relief to long term sustainable development.

The members of the Coalition support the shared vision **“to transform our world through collaborative partnerships that will free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want, and to heal and secure our planet<sup>1</sup>”**. In embarking on this collective journey to implement Agenda 2030 - the plan of action for people, planet and prosperity – the members of Coalition2030 pledge that no one will be left behind.

The strength of Coalition2030 rests in this shared vision, as well as a commitment to the values and principles enshrined in Agenda 2030 including:

- **Solidarity with the most vulnerable** and with the goal of “leaving no-one behind” both in Ireland and throughout the world;
- **Protecting nature** in its own right and as the basis for fulfilling human development
- **Inclusiveness** to enable all civil society actors who share our values and vision to work together on this transformative agenda;
- **Diversity**, respecting the range of views, skills, and capacity of all our members.
- **Inter-generational equity**, protecting the equal rights of current and future generations

<sup>1</sup> See UN Resolution, 25 September, ‘Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’, (known as the SDGs)

# 1. Objectives

Coalition2030 is a multi-stakeholder platform that will engage across the SDGs Agenda from monitoring, evaluation, learning, research, education, public engagement, advocacy and communications activities and events. The coalition's objectives are:

1. To advocate and advance public policy that would achieve the targets in the SDGs by 2030, and to act as a watchdog on the Irish Government's implementation of the SDGs.
2. To promote engagement and informed action on the SDGs by building a coherent understanding of the issues that impact on the lives of people in Ireland and throughout the world.
3. To be an effective organisation that supports, amplifies and leverages the work of its members to promote our collective vision and achieve our goals.

# 3. Governance

The work of Coalition2030 will be underpinned using the following structures and processes:

## 3.1 Structures

### 3.1.1 Plenary

**3.1.1.1 Membership:** This is restricted to organisations and institutions. Membership is open to all civil society organisations who choose to be involved in Coalition2030, across the domestic anti-poverty / equality, international and environmental sectors, academic institutions and trade unions.

**3.1.1.2 Membership Applications:** The following process has been established to support the growth of the Coalition and ensure inclusiveness and diversity of its membership base

- Organisations who wish to join Coalition2030 must submit two references from the existing Coalition members to the Steering Committee.
- All applications will be reviewed by the full Steering Committee representative body at regular Steering Committee meetings, on the basis of their references and their willingness to sign up to this TOR.

- A membership application will be successful where a majority of Steering Committee members present and voting, vote in favour. This could also be done between meetings by an email vote.
- In circumstances where the vote is tied, the presiding chairperson shall have the casting vote.
- Applicants and or an existing member organisation can appeal a Steering Committee decision on proposed membership of Coalition2030 to the Plenary, via the chair of the Steering Committee. Such an appeal will be determined by means of a vote of those present and voting. In the event of a tied vote the presiding chairperson shall have the casting vote. With the exception of the casting vote, all such votes will be by a show of hands.
- All members must abide by the current Coalition2030 Terms of Reference and sign the declaration at the end of the Terms of Reference.

**3.1.1.3 Chair:** the Chairperson of Coalition 2030 will be elected by the plenary from among the members of the Steering Committee. This will normally take place at a Plenary. The elected Chairperson will be in place for 12 months. The Steering Committee will put forward one or more candidates from among its members and they will be voted on by the Plenary. The Steering Committee will seek to rotate the candidates among representatives of the different pillars of the Coalition over time. If a Plenary does not elect a Chairperson for any reason then the Steering Committee may choose a Chairperson from among their members who will serve for 12 months.

**3.1.1.4 Coalition Work-plan:** The Plenary will agree on and review the annual work-plans of the Coalition, based on, inter-alia, assessments of the Steering Committee and Working Groups.

**3.1.1.5 Attendance at the Plenary Meeting:** whilst more than one person from a member organisation may attend a Plenary, each member organisation will only have one vote.

**3.1.1.6 Contact points for Coalition Members:** Each participating organisation will appoint two representatives; a primary and an alternate and they will be the contact points for that organisation. Notifications will be by email to both the primary and alternate representatives of the member organisation.

**3.1.1.7 Information sharing within organisations:** It is the responsibility of member representatives to share information related to Coalition2030 within their organisation, and

to share information with the Coordinator regarding change of contact details for relevant people within member organisations.

**3.1.1.8 Frequency of Meetings:** The Plenary will meet at least twice a year to share information and to be updated by the Steering Committee and the various working groups. Steering Committee and Plenary meetings will be exclusive of one another but may take place on the same day back to back. A meeting of the Plenary must also be held where 40% or more of the existing membership request such a meeting, in writing, with an explanation as to the purpose of such a meeting to the named chairperson for the next meeting of the Plenary.

### 3.1.2 Steering Committee

**3.1.2.1** The Steering Committee of Coalition2030 will act to strengthen the collaborative work of the Coalition, but also to ensure its effective representation in policy dialogue with the Irish Government and other external actors and bodies. This will ordinarily be through members of the Steering Committee representing the Coalition, but the Committee may choose to delegate such representation to another *active member* of the Coalition. The Steering Committee strives to be representative of all the Members of the Coalition.

Specifically the Steering Committee will work to:

- **Inform and Influence Policy** by engaging in policy dialogues at national and international level and contributing to relevant policy processes.
- **Support and encourage research and learning** partnerships and collaboration to build a strong evidence basis to inform policy.
- **Monitor Ireland's** performance in the attainment of the SDGs.
- **Enhance the organisational effectiveness** of Coalition2030 by ensuring appropriate systems, procedures and resources to deliver on our strategic objectives.

**As a result of its work**, the Steering Committee is expected to:

- Ensure policy makers and organisations recognise, value and support work undertaken by civil society.
- Ensure an effective voice for Coalition members that is acknowledged by the state, the political system and other sectors at local, national, European and global levels.
- Consolidate and amplify the diverse voices of civil society, ensuring democratic participation and engagement at all levels, from policy formulation through to monitoring, evaluation and learning.

**3.1.2.2 Membership:** This will be composed of:

2 representatives or their alternates from the domestic anti-poverty / equality NGO sector;  
2 representatives or their alternates from the international NGO sector;  
2 representatives or their alternates from the environmental NGO sector;  
2 representatives or their alternates from the trade union sector; and  
At least 1 academic representative in an advisory capacity, or an alternate from a Higher Education Institution.

Representatives of each sector will be decided by, and be a matter for, members of each of the first four sectors named above. Sectoral representatives on the Steering Committee will serve a 2 year term, with one from each sector stepping down each year. Members may be elected to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms without a break. The academic representative will be sought on the basis of agreement of the Plenary, and will also serve a 2 year term with the option of a further 2 years, subject to the decision of the Plenary.

In the case that a member wishes to end their term early, they may pass their post to a suitable alternate in their organisation. The choice of alternate should be proposed to the Steering Committee and agreement must be reached before the alternate is approached. Once the alternate is in place, they will be in the post of the original member until the time at which the original member was due to finish their term. At that time, the alternate will go through the nomination and election process as normal and start a two year term from this point if elected.

Where a member of the Committee fails to attend meetings for three months in a row without good reason, they will be deemed to have resigned. In these circumstances, the other members of the Steering Committee may replace them with a new representative nominated by the relevant strand of the Coalition.

Members of the Steering Committee are expected to represent the Coalition as a whole when engaged in meetings or communications with external bodies or persons, and not to use these occasions to promote the narrow interests of their organisation or sector.

It is anticipated that Steering Committee Members will on average spend at least one day a month dedicated to their role on the Committee. Committee Members are expected to ensure that the work burden of the Committee is shared fairly by all Members.

Coalition2030 Members should remember and respect the fact that the Members of the Steering Committee are working on a purely voluntary basis.

**3.1.2.3 Chairing the Steering Committee:** The Chairperson elected by the Plenary acts as the Chair of the Steering Committee. In the absence of the Chairperson or by agreement with the Steering Committee, the Steering Committee may choose another member to chair a meeting, in advance or on the day. The Steering Committee may also choose a Vice-Chair to

assist the Chairperson in their duties. Any Vice-Chair must be from a different pillar of the Coalition to the Chairperson.

**3.1.2.4 Attendance at the Steering Committee meeting:** The quorum for a meeting is 4 members.

**3.1.2.5 Frequency of Meetings:** The Steering Committee will meet at least 4 times a year to lead and co-ordinate Coalition2030. Steering Committee and Plenary meetings will be exclusive of one another but may take place back to back.

**3.1.2.6 Decision Making:** the Plenary is the ruling body of Coalition2030, but the Steering Committee will be entrusted to make decisions on behalf of the Plenary, whilst being guided and informed by the work of relevant working groups. In exceptional circumstances the Steering Committee has the right to establish a Coalition2030 working group over and above the discussions at the Plenary. But this decision must then be ratified by the next meeting of the Plenary.

**3.1.2.7 Minutes:** these will be signed off and circulated to the Plenary within ten working days of the meeting, and the draft agenda will be sent out to the Plenary ten working days prior to the next meeting.

**3.1.2.8 Decisions outside meetings:** The Steering Committee can make decisions by email where the timeframe for a decision is urgent. Such decisions by email will only be valid where the email communication is sent at least 3 working days in advance of the deadline, where at least six members of the Steering Committee respond and where a majority of respondents vote in favour/give their approval to the proposal/decision proposed. In the event of a tie the incumbent chairperson will have the casting vote.

## **3.1.2 Working Groups**

**3.1.3.1 Purpose:** Working groups may be formed on the basis of the needs of the Coalition, on either a functional or a policy basis. Proposals for establishment of Working Groups must be presented to the Plenary for approval, together with their Terms of Reference.

**3.1.3.2 Work Plan:** Working Groups must develop a work plan at the beginning of each year and present it to the Plenary for review and approval. If work plans are not approved by the plenary the Steering Committee may approve a work plan at a later date or make alternative arrangements for the participation of the member groups in the work of the coalition.

**3.1.3.3 Membership:** The membership of the working groups will depend on the availability of relevant sectors, organisations and staff, and people who opt in to working groups are

expected to be able to commit for 2 years, or for the life of the working group if less than two years. This will however be subject to the capacity of the organisations and staff on an ongoing basis, and membership will continuously be open to new members of Coalition2030 as deemed appropriate by each working group. If the active membership of a working group falls below 6 representatives of different member organizations, or if the membership ceases to be representative of the various strands of the coalition, or if a working group fails to hold a meeting for three months, the Steering Committee may deem it to have become inactive. In such circumstances, the Steering Committee may seek to reactivate it or make alternative arrangements for the participation of the member groups in the work of the coalition.

**3.1.3.4 Reporting:** The working groups will report back to the Plenary at each Plenary meeting, and to the Steering Committee on a quarterly basis and as the need arises. To facilitate this, each working group should include at least one member of the current Steering Committee.

**3.1.3.5 Representation:** Working Groups do not speak on behalf of the Coalition.

**3.1.3.6 Governance:** Working Groups can propose their own Terms of Reference, on the basis that they are compatible with these Terms of Reference.

**3.1.3.6 Chairing the Working Groups:** the members of the Working Groups may decide to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.

### **3.1.4 Secretariat and Coordination**

- The Steering Committee will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Irish Environmental Network (or another network or organization involved with the Coalition) to provide secretariat services such as coordination, line management, financial management and communications.
- The Secretariat will employ someone to act as Coordinator of the Coalition on foot of a job description agreed with the Steering Committee. At least one nominee of the Steering Committee will be involved in the appointment process.
- The Coordinator will act at the direction of the Steering Committee, to whom they are accountable. They will report to the ceo of the Secretariat who will act as their line manager. The Secretariat will also provide standard HR functions (managing payroll, leave etc).



## **3.1.5 Finances**

### **3.1.5.1 Financial Management:**

The Steering Committee is responsible for day-to-day decisions regarding the management of the Coalition's funds. The Steering Committee will report on the finances at every Plenary. The Board of Management of the host organisation is responsible for ensuring that the funds are properly managed. An agreed protocol between the Board of the fund holder and the Coalition will form the basis of all decisions regarding the finances of the Coalition.

### **3.1.5.2 Funding.**

The Coalition expects to receive financial support from the Government in its role as a key stakeholder in the progression towards the delivery of the SDGs. However this is not expected to be sufficient to support the ambitions of the Coalition, so Members are still expected to contribute to the funding of coalition's work, in as far as they are able to do so. Accordingly, the Coalition seeks an annual voluntary contribution from each member to contribute to the work of the Coalition. However, it is accepted that some members may not be in a position to do so. A sliding scale has been developed to determine a fee proposal based on the size and income of your organisation.

## **3.2 Processes**

### **3.2.1 Decision Making, Voting and Membership of External Bodies**

**3.2.1.1 Decision-making:** Where there are already agreed policy positions and media statements of Coalition2030 which are requested by external audiences, Coalition2030 assumes that all members implicitly sign off on all policies / approaches already agreed under the responsibilities of the Steering Committee/ working groups, and agree to the use of NGO logos unless members explicitly state otherwise.

Where policy positions and media statements are not yet agreed:

- Requests should be sent to the Steering Committee sector representatives for review and approval at Steering Committee meetings.
- In the event that a requirement emerges between Steering Committee meetings, requests should be sent to the Steering Committee sector representative for review.
  - The Steering Committee Sector Rep will communicate via email to the full Steering Committee requesting review and relevant approvals.

- Such requests require a minimum of 10 working days for processing and sign off.
- Full records of the request and policy content will be shared at the next Plenary members meeting.

Coalition2030 members ideally will have at least 10 working days to read and sign off on substantial areas of policy or other matters requiring agreement by Coalition members. Where externally imposed deadlines do not allow for this, the Steering Committee will be mandated by the Plenary to both plan and respond to external requests to meet and submit policy positions to relevant domestic and international audiences.

Decisions on policy will be carried out by consensus at both Steering Committee and Plenary. Where an issue is contentious and agreement cannot be reached easily by the Steering Committee / Plenary, then Appendix 1: Decision-Making Protocol applies, in cases where there is sufficient time to agree a position. If a short term response is required from an external source and no position can be agreed quickly, then Coalition2030 does not submit / respond to external audiences on that particular issue.

**3.2.1.2 Membership of External Bodies:** If the external request is specifically to Coalition2030 (as opposed to an organisation or a sector), then representation on the external body is decided by the Plenary.

All member organisations are notified of the call and given five days to make nominations.

Nominations will be in the form of an A4 one page statement of their qualifications for the role, in 12 point Arial and including a passport sized headshot photo. All member organisations are then invited to respond to a ballot within 5 days. The ballot will be by Single Transferable Vote (STV).

### **3.2.2 Representation of the Coalition**

If the external request for a one-off event or for media comment /contribution is specifically in relation to Coalition2030 then the following will apply. For one-off events, meetings and media, the Steering Committee will decide on the selection of individuals representing Coalition2030 from amongst the Coalition2030 membership. The Steering Committee will keep the Members informed of these requests and the decision-making involved.

### **3.2.2.1 One-off events**

Representation of Coalition2030 at One-off events will be carried out by a group of people drawn from the Plenary of members on the basis of:

- their expertise on a relevant policy / issue,
- sectoral representation and balance, depending on the issues discussed
- availability of the individuals on the times / dates of given meetings

Representation of Coalition2030 shall be decided on by the Steering Committee, and the Steering Committee will appoint 2 of its members to sign off on the decision.

### **3.2.2.2 Media**

Representation of Coalition2030 in the media will be carried out by an individual or individuals decided by the Steering Committee. Choice of spokespersons is based on their expertise in the media, their understanding of the issue(s) being discussed and their availability.

Members of the Coalition are encouraged to display the Coalition2030 members Logo on their websites, stationery etc.

### **3.2.2.3 Branding**

The use of the Coalition's name and logo is limited to events, publications, press releases and other emanations originating from the Coalition and sanctioned by the Coalition Steering Committee.

The decision as to whether an event, publication, press release or other emanation can be branded as a Coalition2030 event, publication, press release or other emanation will be made by the Steering Committee.

Having made the decision that the event, publication, press release or other emanation will be branded with the Coalition2030 logo, the Steering Committee will delegate and empower 2 of its members to act on its behalf in enabling the process to proceed.

As not all Members are happy with their own logos being attached to Coalition2030 events, publications, press releases or other emanations, they will therefore only carry Coalition2030 branding.

To allow for consensus decision-making, all published policy or position papers or documents will carry the following rider on the contacts page:

***This document was developed using the Coalition2030 processes but is not necessarily the policy of each member organisation in the Coalition.***

### **3.2.3 Planning, Review and Operations**

The Coalition will:

- Develop an annual work plan, incorporating the intended activities of the working groups.
- In overseeing the implementation of the workplan the Steering Committee shall ensure that there are adequate, appropriate and inclusive spaces and opportunities for participation by members of the Coalition, whether or not there are active working groups in any given period. In ensuring participation, the Steering Committee and the Coordinator will make every effort to ensure balanced representation from the various strands of the Coalition and they may call on existing coalitions within the strands to help ensure that.
- Review its procedures and the effectiveness of its joint work every three years thereafter. This will be overseen by the Steering Committee but the Terms of Reference for same will be agreed by the Plenary.

# Agreement to the Terms of Reference

As authorised by the organisation we represent, and whose name and address is inscribed below, we agree to act according to this Terms of Reference agreed between the Members of Coalition2030 as revised in June 2020. We agree to the host organisation keeping on file the email addresses and mobile numbers of our representative and alternate, in order to allow us to receive communications from Coalition2030, for as long as our organisation remains a member of Coalition2030.

Signed: .....  
(Potential Member Organisation)

Signed: .....  
(Potential Member Organisation)

Organisation Name and Address: .....

Date: .....

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Signed: .....  
(Coalition 2030 Steering Committee member)

Date: .....

## Appendix 1: Decision-Making Protocol

In the event that consensus on a policy issue cannot be reached at Plenaries, the following protocol is applied. For a policy position to be adopted, a proposal needs at least 40% of 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	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"

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 person currently holding the chair of the Steering Committee at the earliest opportunity to see if a satisfactory compromise can be reached. If an organisation chooses to use the veto it means that the decision is postponed until the next Plenary meeting. In the case where a decision is absolutely necessary before the next meeting, Coalition members will have five working days to discuss / exchange correspondence on the matter, and five working days to vote on the matter.

The Steering Committee will gather the above responses and progress accordingly, using one of the following options:

- Bi-laterals
- Drop agenda item
- Pursue issue elsewhere
- Agree that it does not impact negatively
- Refocus
- Go ahead with a majority view