

## **Roles and responsibilities of Freshwater BON Coordination Committee (CC) members**

FWBON is a global community of practice with increasing influence and impact. FWBON's Coordination Committee (CC) consists of FWBON co-chairs, several regional coordinators per continent and several thematic coordinators. The roles and responsibilities of FWBON members are described in a separate document.

Being a member of FWBON and in particular, being a CC member is invariably transformative and career-changing for the individuals involved. In many cases being part of the CC will give FWBON members the first opportunity to participate in international platforms in a multicultural atmosphere, engage with other parts of GEOBON and our major partners and to formally contribute to setting the global biodiversity agenda. In return for these benefits, FWBON CC members are expected to contribute their time and skills to FWBON at a higher level than most FWBON members will do. Most of the contributions require coordination among FWBON members. Active participation in meetings of the coordinators of the respective region or thematic is thus expected from CC members, as are regular interactions with the respective FWBON members. This document captures the roles and responsibilities expected from CC members. Because these tasks and contributions take time, CC members should not take up more than one role, i.e., act either as regional or thematic coordinator.

### **Representing FWBON in global and regional initiatives**

It is crucial for FWBON to interact with global and regional initiatives addressing topics that are of relevance for FWBON and might help advance FWBON activities.

#### **Identify relevant global and regional initiatives**

By engaging with the membership (see below), CC members should proactively develop awareness of new and ongoing initiatives in their region or their thematic field, evaluate the role FWBON could play in these initiatives, and identify synergies between these initiatives and FWBON activities. Opportunities or invitations to contribute to such initiatives should be discussed in the entire CC to foster collaborations across regions and inclusivity.

#### **Invitations to meetings and committees based on FWBON roles**

If FWBON CC members are attending a meeting or joining a committee because of an invitation that was (at least partly) extended due to their role in FWBON or because they present a FWBON project, they must attend/participate (also) as a representative of FWBON. CC members should thus introduce themselves as representing FWBON in those meetings and committees. If such an invitation conflicts with other commitments, CC members should decline the invitation and propose another FWBON member to represent FWBON in that initiative. This needs to be stated as soon as possible so that options can be discussed and other FWBON members can volunteer.

## **Nomination from FWBON to attend workshops and committees**

With increasing frequency FWBON co-chairs receive invitations to participate in global or regional initiatives, workshops, and committees. Also, FWBON co-chairs proactively identify strategically important initiatives, contact the organisers and ask for FWBON to be invited to these. FWBON co-chairs will then approach suitable regional and thematic coordinators to discuss their participation in these events representing FWBON.

## **Engagement with the membership**

FWBON is defined by its entire membership. The membership should be representative of the diversity in the global biodiversity community (diversity in this community includes geographic, cultural, taxonomic, different approaches, professional situation, etc.). The FWBON is currently still biased towards members from academia from high-income countries. CC members are strongly encouraged to work towards increasing and balancing this diversity in the membership. Therefore, it is important that CC members are familiar with the list of FWBON members and use the same basic information when they communicate the basic statistics e.g., how many members from how many countries with which background, etc.

It is the responsibility of FWBON **regional coordinators** to enlarge the FWBON network in the diverse directions described above and update the membership lists for their regions (the membership list is in a specific folder of the FWBON Google Drive). Currently FWBON is organised in the regions North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania. It is also the responsibility of regional coordination to send welcome emails to new members in their region and ask them to complete the FWBON membership survey to get an overview of their work, activities, and outreach. To encourage engagement of FWBON members in FWBON initiatives, it is the responsibility of regional coordinators to maintain regular communication with the regional membership by sharing newsletters, regional updates, project updates and other news. Coordinators within a region are expected to work together and meet regularly to organize and facilitate these regular communications and regional progress on FWBON activities.

The responsibilities of **thematic coordinators** centres on the coordination of FWBON activities in key thematic fields. First and foremost, this requires the thematic coordinators to identify other FWBON members who have expertise on that theme and/or wish to work on it within FWBON. This information is available in the membership survey results. Examples for thematic fields include but are not limited to remote sensing, -omics, databases, etc and their applications to freshwater biodiversity monitoring. The membership of thematic groups should be as diverse as possible, i.e., comprising members from all regions, backgrounds, career stages, etc. Thematic coordinators are expected to initiate activities in their thematic field in discussions with FWBON members of their thematic group. The thematic coordinators are also expected to coordinate these activities with activities and initiatives in their thematic field lead by other organizations. For this, they are expected to proactively reach out and

interact with networks and key stakeholders in their thematic field. Examples of such networks and stakeholders are Task Forces and Working Groups of GEOBON and the IUCN, networks such as the European Long-Term Ecosystem and socio-ecological Research Infrastructure (eLTER) or freshwater data platforms such as the Freshwater Information Platform (FIP) and GBIF. Thematic coordinators are expected to establish and maintain the exchange between the FWBON CC and these professionals and networks, and encourage them to have a link to FWBON (e.g., through FWBON members). When doing so, thematic coordinators are also expected to contribute to the diversity in the membership and to reduce biases in global representation.

### **Initiating and contributing to FWBON outputs**

FWBON's impact and credibility largely rides on its visible outputs. It is everyone's responsibility to progress FWBON's work. FWBON CC members are strongly encouraged to initiate and contribute to FWBON-led projects and publications. Individual CC members can put up their hands to propose and lead a new publication or project proposal, or contribute to a publication or proposal led by others. If you're leading an author or project team, you are expected to invite others (from inside or outside of FWBON), and provide leadership and mentoring where it is needed (see details in the list below).

The following are the main rules around leading FWBON project proposals and publications

1. **Propose a new publication or project idea at the CC meetings** and deposit an outline in the corresponding folder on the FWBON Google Drive (see template for outline there).
2. **Work with others.** The CC and the broader membership is a treasure of potential collaborators on just about any topic CC members wish to work on. Collaborative work and output is likely to be more successful and influential than works authored by one or two people.
3. **Promote diversity.** When composing an author/project team or working in an author/project team, CC members are expected to take this as an opportunity to promote diversity. Identify and use possibilities to include co-authors/co-workers from minority groups that are underrepresented in the biodiversity literature and research. These include early-career scientists, scientists from indigenous groups, scientists from non-western cultures, non-academic stakeholders, underrepresented genders, and other minorities. CC members are also expected to establish mechanisms that help to include contributions in languages other than English.
4. **Avoid duplication.** Before initiating a new publication/proposal or contributing to existing ones, CC members should find out about existing publications and initiatives and seek to fill gaps in publications rather than duplicating what is already happening.
5. **Fully acknowledge the ideas of others:** Ideas are the currency of science. In initiating or contributing to publications or proposals, it is OK to use ideas of others in the CC or the broader membership only if those concerned are consulted, if possible invited, and appropriately recognised.

## References

Scholes, R.J., Walters, M., Turak, E., Saarenmaa, H., Heip, C.H., Tuama, É.Ó., Faith, D.P., Mooney, H.A., Ferrier, S., Jongman, R.H. and Harrison, I.J., 2012. Building a global observing system for biodiversity. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 4(1), pp.139-146.