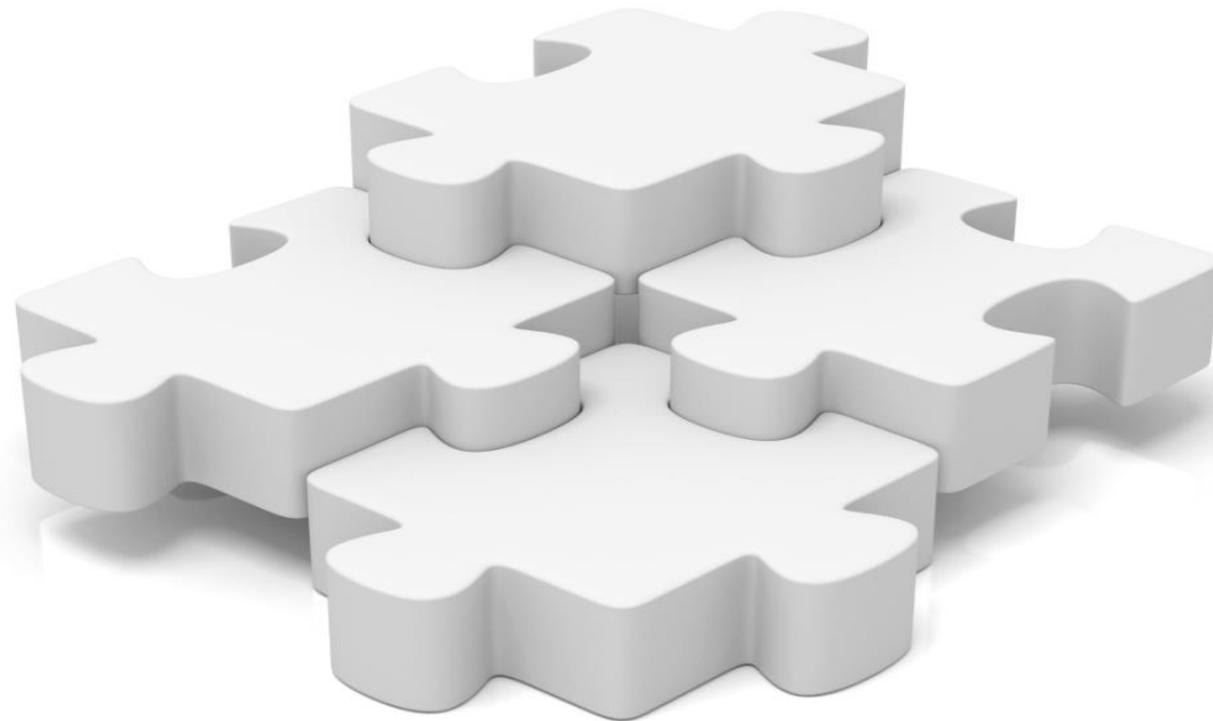




## **Views on the Current State of Conservation Partnerships in Canada**

November 30, 2017





# What We Heard

# Themes

-  Partnerships come in all shapes and sizes
-  Capacity building is one of the most significant challenges in the sector
-  The role of government is constantly changing, but it is at the heart of policy development and implementation success
-  Indigenous conservation communities and interests need to be a key priority in the sector
-  Partnerships thrive when expectations are clear and agreed upon
-  We can't meet our conservation goals and priorities without partnerships

# Characteristics of Successful Partnerships



Clearly defined roles, objectives and understanding of capacity to deliver



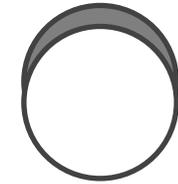
Innovative funding agreements and channels



Partners have distinct expertise and skill sets



Established performance framework



Maximization of tools, including on-the-ground constituencies



# Key Insights

# Theme 1:

## Partnerships come in all shapes and sizes

- Diversity characterizes the sector – mandates, organizational size, and achievable impact differ across the sector
- Formal and informal partnerships exist, and both are beneficial
- Operational structures for partnership building and delivery are wide-ranging
- The sector is nimble and able to take advantage of opportunities as they arise precisely because of its flexibility

“There is no ‘one size fits all’ when it comes to partnerships. Diversity and variety are the hallmarks of conservation partnerships today”

## Theme 2:

### Capacity building is one of the most significant challenges in the sector

- Sector characterized by a healthy mix of collaboration and competition
- Common perception in the sector that the government favours large, national organizations but also needs projects to be delivered a local and regional level
- The current capacity of the sector to deliver against common goals can impede successful partnerships
- Long-term, consistent access to funding is a major roadblock
- People and relationships matter in building and executing partnerships

**“Sometimes there simply isn’t the on-the-ground capacity to move forward with an initiative, which means we can’t meet our targets and goals”**

# Theme 3:

**The role of government is constantly changing, but it is at the heart of policy development and implementation success**

- Government is shifting away from policy implementation
- As a result, governments are looking partners – but they need to be actively engaged
- Prospective partners need to clearly outline their value proposition to government
- Partners can reach out to constituencies that the government has little access to

**“Governments want to support partnerships, but it’s like a potluck, not a restaurant – you’ve got to bring something to the table”**

# Theme 4:

## Indigenous conservation communities and interests need to be a key priority in the sector

- Indigenous communities want to be proactively engaged by government and ENGOS
- Partnerships with Indigenous groups need to be for substance, not just show
- Access in terms of language and trust can be a challenge
- Capacity-building is a particular challenge facing Indigenous conservation and environmental groups

**“The entire conservation sector would stand to benefit from greater and stronger connections with our Indigenous partners across Canada”**

# Theme 5:

## Partnerships thrive when expectations are clear and agreed upon

- Government and NGOs agree that the most successful partnerships are those with a defined structure in terms of roles, objectives and governance
- This structure varies from a formal partnership agreement to a handshake
- Partnerships are successful when partners take advantage of and compliment each others skill sets
- Few organizations have KPIs in place to formally evaluate partnerships – “success” is most often determined qualitatively

**“Partners need to be clear about expectations, goals and governance – that’s the pathway to a successful and sustainable partnership”**

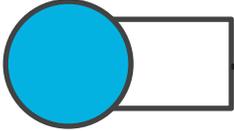
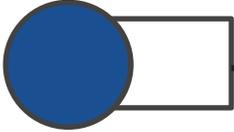
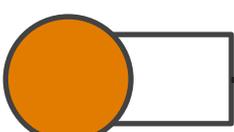
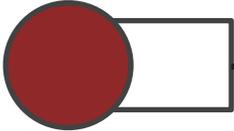
# Theme 6:

## We can't meet our conservation goals and priorities without partnerships

- The end goal of partnerships is to facilitate tangible and aligned change
- Partnerships are often proactive and allow the sector to continue to work with limited funding
- Partnerships can begin with advocating for and developing policy, but are currently just as much about implementing policy
- The public is more supportive of conservation efforts than ever before – and the sector needs to more effectively leverage this support

**“Partnerships are essential to effecting real change and meeting our conservation objectives. No organization or government can truly go it alone”**

# “What we want to see more of”

-  Continue to seek out formal and informal partnerships
-  Mainstreaming conservation efforts
-  Mobilization and utilization of the public and your membership base in order to create change and opportunities
-  Proactive partnerships at all stages of policy development and implementation
-  Innovative partnership models



**Toronto Office**

145 King Street East,  
2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M5C 2Y7

(T) 416-864-7112

(F) 416-864-7117

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**Ottawa Office**

100 rue Queen Street  
Suite 550  
Ottawa, ON  
K1P 1J9

(T) 613-231-2630

(F) 613-231-4113

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[strategycorp.com](http://strategycorp.com)