

CITIZEN SCIENCE
FOR THE AMAZON

Bylaws
Citizen Science for the Amazon Network

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Table of Contents

1. Vision	4
2. Mission	4
3. Purpose	4
4. Goals	4
5. Scope	4
6. Name	4
7. Governance Structure	5
7.1 General Assembly	5
7.2 Steering Committee	5
7.3 Management Team	7
7.4 Collaboration Groups	7
8. Network Partners	8
9. Memberships	9
10. Qualifications to vote	9
11. Transparency & accountability	9
12. Bylaws update or amendment	9
13. Governance model evaluation	9
14. Other provisions	10
Attachment 1: Governance structure	10

1. Vision

We share the [Amazon Waters Initiative's](#) vision: "The biodiversity and integrity of the vast, interlinked, and dynamic Amazon freshwater system is maintained for the support of human wellbeing, wildlife, and the environments on which they depend."

2. Mission

We are a citizen science knowledge network that takes action for the conservation and management of the Amazon Basin. Citizens and scientists build knowledge together about Amazon freshwater ecosystems with a holistic basin approach, relying on technology and innovation to generate accessible, reliable, and timely data and information.

3. Purpose

To generate knowledge for informed conservation and management decision-making in the Amazon Basin, towards its environmental and social well-being.

4. Goals

By 2024, we contribute to generate and share knowledge about freshwater ecosystems at Amazon basin scale for informed decision-making in favor of environmental and human well-being, through the following goals:

- A strengthened and resilient knowledge network fostering a two-fold approach: citizen science and integrated basin management at appropriate scales.
- Data, information, and knowledge about Amazon freshwater ecosystems are generated and shared in a reliable, timely, and accessible way, with an integrated basin management approach.
- The network catalyzes innovation cycles and promotes an experimentation/learning culture.
- Information generated by the Network is used for decision-making at different scales, positively impacting both conservation and human well-being throughout the Amazon Basin.

5. Scope

The Network focuses on the Amazon basin from a multiscale and unifying vision at sub-basin scale. We recognize that the Amazon ecosystem is interconnected and requires local, regional, and global approaches to foster its conservation and development. At this early stage, the network's priorities focus on water, fish, water ecosystems and their connection with people, acknowledging that interdisciplinarity, interculturality, and diversity of visions and types of knowledge are key to develop its [objectives](#).

The Network builds knowledge based on pillars of citizen science and open science. We recognize the value of diversity of knowledge, and the need to preserve and incorporate different ways of knowing into our endeavors.

6. Name

The Network's name is "Citizen Science for the Amazon Network." For legal representation purposes, we will use the Host Organization's information. The Network's official documents are in Spanish: In the case of any divergence of interpretation, the Spanish version will prevail over versions in other languages, such as those in Portuguese or English.

7. Governance Structure

The Network's governance structure is as follows:

1. General Assembly of the Network's Partners
2. Steering Committee
3. Management Team led by a Host Organization
4. Collaboration Groups

The General Assembly has the power to create other governance bodies.

7.1 General Assembly

The General Assembly comprises all Network's partners. Partners are those who have signed the Letter of Commitment with the Network.

Functions:

- a. To elect the Steering Committee members.
- b. To evaluate the Steering Committee's performance and make recommendations for improvement.
- c. To approve the Network Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans.
- d. To approve Bylaws amendments.
- e. To provide feedback to the Management Team and Collaboration Teams.

Frequency of meetings: The Steering Committee convenes an Ordinary General Assembly every year, either in person or virtually. If more than 30% of the Network's Partners wish to have an additional annual meeting (in person or virtually), the Steering Committee will convene an Extraordinary General Assembly through the Management Team at least one (1) month in advance. The procedure for convening meetings is set out in the [Operational Agreements](#).

Decision-making: The General Assembly's decisions shall be taken by simple majority vote, i.e. when agreed upon by half plus one of the members participating in the annual meeting. The General Assembly may agree to have other types of vote (absolute majority, qualified majority, unanimity) for particular cases. Partners may also participate in person, virtually or delegate their vote – through a signed power of attorney – to another partner partaking in the General Assembly. Resolutions made during the General Assembly are recorded in official minutes and published in the Network's website.

Other provisions for convening General Assembly's meetings are set out in the [Operational Agreements](#).

7.2 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is comprised of:

- Four (4) representatives of the Network elected by the General Assembly
- Two (2) representatives of the Collaboration Groups
- One (1) member of the Host Organization

Members of the Steering Committee: Only Network Partners can be part of the list of candidates to the Steering Committee. Partners can be nominated by other partners, nominate themselves, or be invited by the Management Team/Steering Committee to be part of that list. The Steering Committee will be elected prior to the General Assembly annual meeting, during which it will be officially presented.

The Management Team will be in charge of the procedure for convening meetings, elaboration of the list of candidates, and election of the Steering Committee members, as set forth in the [Operational Agreements](#).

Steering Committee members should be representative of the network's stakeholders and geographical scope, considering the entire basin scale and the principles of diversity set out in the Manifesto. Therefore, the Management Team/Steering Committee will proactively engage the Network's Partners or send relevant invitations.

The Steering Committee (SC) may invite one expert – Network partner or not – to become a member of the SC, in order to strengthen some specific capacities. Their participation and period of participation as SC member will be approved by unanimous vote by the Steering Committee. The period of participation is for a maximum of two years. Afterwards, the membership status may be terminated or renewed based on the SC priorities.

SC members' terms: Network representatives selected by the General Assembly, as well as representatives from the Collaboration Groups, will be elected for a four-year period. They will remain in office until new members are elected. Also, they may be reelected consecutively for an additional four-year period, and non-consecutively for indefinite periods. The Management Team Representative is appointed by the Host Organization. Election procedure is defined according to the terms set forth in the [Operational Agreements](#).

In case one of the SC representatives resigns or is no longer able to perform their functions, the SC may invite to one of the non-elected candidates from the candidate list. The first candidate with the highest number of votes from the list will be invited. If not available, the next candidate will be invited. If no one is available, the SC may invite to one temporary representative, based on representativeness criteria, until the next General Assembly is convened.

Functions:

- a. To convene the General Assembly.
- b. To lead and ensure the proper implementation of the Network Strategic Plan and Action Plans.
- c. To evaluate and approve the admission of partners to the Network.
- d. To evaluate the performance of the Management Team and Host Organization.
- e. To provide guidelines for conflict management within the Network – directions to solve exceptional cases or ethical issues of high complexity for the Network.
- f. To approve the Management Team Work Plan and the Network Annual Budget, as well as to define and lead the Network financial sustainability strategy.
- g. To promote and approve strategic partnerships and actions to position the Network, including its participation in projects, or the subscription of strategic partnerships.
- h. To approve the Network's policies, including Access & Data Use Policies, Exchange Information Policies, etc.
- i. To define guidelines and approve the Network's Communication Strategy.
- j. To evaluate the Network's Governance Model, and to propose and implement changes/other suggestions, according to their abilities.
- k. To address both guidelines and demands from the General Assembly, as well as to account for its management.

Frequency of meetings: The SC will meet at least 4 times a year, once every three months.

Quorum: The presence of at least 50% plus one of the partners (4) is required for the SC to meet.

Decision-making: The SC will take decisions by consensus where possible. If no agreement is reached by consensus, decisions will be taken by simple majority. The SC will meet in person or virtually; and consultations among members can be done by email or other online mechanism.

7.3 Management Team

The Management Team (MT) comprises representatives of the Host Organization and partners who have joined by invitation or by interest. The Management Team is led by the Host Organization and it can be comprised of just its representatives, in case no other organizations join.

Host Organization: The representative of the Host Organization is the same member appointed by the Management Team before the SC. The Steering Committee can ratify or renew the Host Organization every five years. It can be reelected indefinitely. The Host Organization has to comply with the eligibility criteria defined by the SC.

Functions:

- a. To support the SC administration in financial, logistics, administrative and technical terms.
- b. To write the Management Team Annual Work Plan as per the Network Strategic Plan and Action Plans approved by the General Assembly.
- c. To implement the Network's Budget as per SC directions.
- d. To promote and validate the creation of Collaboration Teams, as well as to monitor their operation.
- e. To design and implement the strategy of partners and collaborators engagement, and of alliances.
- f. To ensure the rights, responsibilities, and benefits of partners.
- g. To solve conflicts among Network partners, according to SC guidelines.
- h. To design the Network's Communication Strategy based on SC guidelines. Once approved by the SC, implement such strategy. To manage the Network's communication channels, as well as to guide the compliance of its Branding Guidelines .
- i. To officially represent the Network through the Host Organization.
- j. To deliver accountability before the SC.

For legal purposes, and where and when necessary, the Network will be represented by the Host Organization, which also leads the Management Team.

7.4 Collaboration Groups

Collaboration groups are created according to Network Partners' interest. Its formalization must comply to the procedure set forth in the [Terms of Reference for Collaboration Groups](#).

They act autonomously and their activities are framed within the Network purpose, principles and strategic plan. They can be task forces with a specific result, or Communities of Practices which gather together with a common purpose and multiple objectives.

Functions:

- a. Within the first 12 months of operation, to agree on their own collaboration terms and develop a work plan in close coordination with the Management Team.
- b. To update the work plan annually and share it with the Management Team.
- c. To maintain active communication with the Management Team.

- d. To write an Annual Monitoring Report for the work plan and share it with the Management Team.
- e. To advise the General Assembly, Steering Committee, or Management Team on the technical aspects of its competence, where relevant and/or required.

8. Network Partners

Any individual or organization interested in citizen science in the Amazon can become a partner.

The SC evaluates the admission of potential partners. Evaluation procedure and affiliation is set forth in the [Membership Terms and Conditions](#).

Partners' rights:

1. To participate in General Assembly meetings.
2. To apply or be nominated to the Steering Committee or to form Collaboration Teams. For partner organizations, they can apply as a host organization.
3. To have access to data generated by the partner, and to data generated by the Network, which are exclusive for partners, according to the Data Use and Access Terms.
4. To receive regular updates on the Network's progress.
5. To manage resources in order to develop activities related to the Network or that contribute to its strategic objectives, according to the Network's Strategic Plan and following the Financial Sustainability Guidelines.
6. To represent the Network according to the Membership Terms and Conditions.
7. To report, provide feedback, and approve the Network's Governance Model, Strategic Plan, and policies through the Assembly.
8. To participate in the Network's capacity building activities when they are freely available, or have access to special rates if a contribution is required.

Partners' responsibilities:

1. To participate in the General Assembly. For organizations, appoint their representative(s) to the Network.
2. To keep contact information updated in order to receive or exchange information with Network partners.
3. To share the Network's principles, as well as to cooperate in good faith and in a spirit of solidarity and transparency.
4. To participate in face-to-face and virtual meetings of the Network's partners and Collaboration Teams, contributing with your knowledge and experience.
5. To be aware of and provide feedback to the documentation related to the Network's Governance Model and other policies.
6. To embrace and comply with the Network policies and guidelines, including Data & Information Use and Access Policies, the branding guidelines, etc.

Duration of Membership: The membership is for an indefinite period of time, and it comes into force when signing the Letter of Commitment. Grounds for termination are: 1) the partner's death; 2) voluntary waiver, with prior irrevocable notice to the Steering Committee; 3) decision of the Steering Committee: When a partner has displayed detrimental conduct against the Network's Principles, they can be disenrolled by SC resolution. Before this disenrollment, the partner should be listened to in person or by written communication. This decision shall be justified in writing and communicated to the partner.

9. Memberships

The different membership categories are as follows: partner, stakeholder, strategic partner and sponsor. The affiliation procedure is set forth in the [Membership Terms and Conditions.](#)

Partners: Memberships are not paid. However, partners can make annual voluntary contributions. The General Assembly will define these amounts and will be published annually in the Network's website.

Stakeholders: Organizations or individuals interested in collaborating or supporting the Network without becoming partners can join the Citizen Science for the Amazon community through the available channels or get in touch with the Management Team. In this case, they are considered as Stakeholders.

Strategic Partners: Specific collaborations between the SC and strategic partners can also take place through Memorandums of Understanding (MoU). In this case, they are seen as Strategic Partners.

Sponsors: Organizations financially supporting the Network's activities are called sponsors. The SC or Management Team can agree upon other benefits, according to the terms negotiated for this funding.

10. Qualifications to vote

Partners representing organizations affiliated with the Network, are entitled to four votes. Partners affiliated to the Network as individuals are entitled to one vote.

11. Transparency & accountability

The Steering Committee, Management Team, and Collaboration Teams will be accountable for, and report on their activities during the General Assembly. Such documents will be available in the Network's website for partners, stakeholders, sponsors and public at large.

The SC or Management Team will promote the participation of experts or other key persons, who are not partners of the Network, for consultations about strategic issues, financial matters, policies, management, and accountability of the Network.

12. Bylaws update or amendment

The General Assembly approves Bylaws updates and amendments by simple majority of votes, i.e. half plus one of the partners participating at the assembly. For calculating votes, the number of votes per type of partner (either organization or individual) will be considered. Voting can be either virtually, in person or by delegating their vote through a signed power of attorney. The Management Team will define the specific procedure.

13. Governance model evaluation

The Governance model will be comprehensively evaluated every four years. The SC will lead this process to be presented to the General Assembly for its approval. The Steering Committee may suggest to the General Assembly or make –based on its competences – partial amendments to this model.

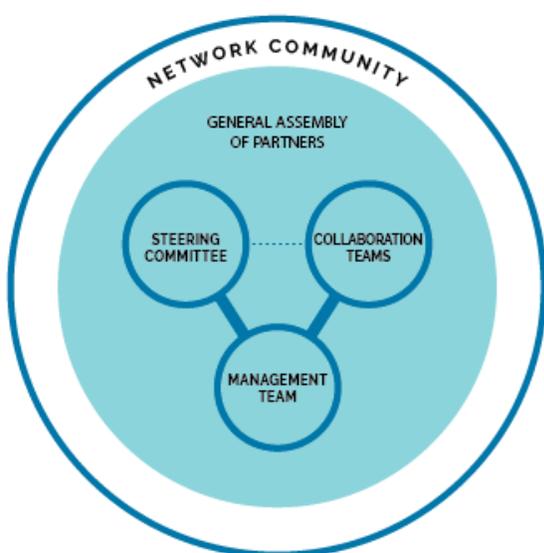
14. Other provisions

After the Network's dissolution or annulment, the assets – if any – will be transferred to the organization appointed by the General Assembly. Such assets should be used immediately and exclusively for promoting citizen science in the Amazon.

These Bylaws come into force from the moment the SC approves it by simple majority of votes.

Definitions of these memberships, documentation and other related terms are available in the [Glossary](#).

Attachment 1: Governance structure



General Assembly (GA)

Highest decision-making instance. This group of partners decides the Network's pathway. They choose the SC representative.

Steering Committee (ST)

Group defining guidelines and strategies (technical and operational) to ensure the implementation of the Network's strategic planning. It ensures consistency between activities and the Network's purpose. It guides the Management Team endeavors.

Management Team (MT)

Led by the Host Organization and responsible of implementing the Network's strategic plan. It manages the administrative, financial and operational aspects. Moreover, it articulates the technical aspects between the SC and Collaboration Teams.

Collaboration Groups (CG)

Collaborative workspace of the Network's partners. They work in multiple scales and in a holistic manner at basin level, within the strategic plan framework. They advise to the SC and MT for a wide array of issues, especially technical issues.

Network Community

It gathers together strategic partners, stakeholders and sponsors who are connected through the channels of the Citizen Science for the Amazon Network, as well as those users employing the Network's tools (e.g.: Ictio, Aquakil).

Attachment 2: Index of the Governance Model

#	Document	Policies, manuals and guidelines
0	Summary of the Governance Model	Policy of access and use of Ictio data
1	Manifesto	Manual of the Project's Brand Use - model for the Manual of Network's Brand Use
2	Strategic Planning	Guidelines to understand the Governance Model
3	Bylaws	
4	Membership Terms and Conditions	
5	Application for partner affiliation	
6	Letter of Commitment for partners	
7	Terms of Reference for the Management Team	

8	Terms of Reference for Collaboration Teams	
9	Formation request for Collaboration Teams	
10	Agreements and Action Plan: Collaboration Teams	
11	Financial Sustainability Guidelines	
12	Communication Guidelines	
13	Operational Agreements	
14	Glossary	