Terms of Reference Alberta Biocontrol Consortium (ABC)

1. Purpose: To collaboratively facilitate, support, and coordinate the research, implementation, and delivery of sustainable biological control programs for invasive species in Alberta.

2. Objectives:

   a. Identify and prioritize invasive species targets for biocontrol in Alberta.
   b. Support the development and evaluation of biocontrol agents.
   c. Facilitate knowledge sharing among member organizations.
   d. Secure financial and in-kind resources to support biocontrol initiatives.

3. Membership
   a. Membership in the Alberta Biocontrol Consortium (ABC) shall be open to organizations only.
   b. Organizations interested in joining the Alberta Biocontrol Consortium (ABC) must submit a simple membership application outlining their interest and alignment with the Consortium's objectives. The Steering Committee will review and approve all new applications.
   c. Membership is renewed annually through a straightforward confirmation process, giving existing members the opportunity to reaffirm their participation and allowing new organizations to apply.
   d. The Membership year is April 1 – March 31.
   e. Expectations of Members:
      i. Actively participate in meetings, discussions, and decision-making processes.
      ii. Designate a representative to attend meetings and communicate on behalf of the organization.
      iii. Share relevant information, expertise, and resources to support the objectives of the ABC.
      iv. Contribute, where possible, financial or in-kind support toward collaborative initiatives.
      v. Promote the work and goals of the ABC within their own networks and sectors.
      vi. Adhere to the agreed-upon principles of collaboration, transparency, and mutual respect.

4. Governance Structure: The ABC shall be governed by a Steering Committee elected from among the member organizations. The Steering Committee is responsible for providing strategic direction, overseeing implementation of activities, and ensuring alignment with the organization's objectives.
   a. The Steering Committee shall be composed of up to 19 Steering Committee Members:
      a. Federal Government (1)

    b. Provincial Government (1)
    c. Indigenous Government (1)
    d. Rural Municipality (5 one from each AAAF region)
    e. Urban Municipality (5)
    f. Producer Group (1)
    g. Industry (1)
    h. Non-Government Organization (1)
    i. Member at Large (3)
b. Steering Committee Members will be elected by a vote of the ABC membership during the spring meeting. Each member organization gets one vote. If a vacancy comes up mid-term, the Steering Committee can appoint someone to fill the role until the next election.
c. Alternates: Each Steering Committee Member may appoint an Alternate, who may vote in their absence.
d. Term periods: Steering Committee Members shall serve two-year terms and may seek re-election for a second consecutive term. After serving two consecutive terms, Steering Committee Members must step down from the Steering Committee for a minimum of one year before being eligible to stand for election again.
e. The Steering Committee shall vote on funding priorities and decisions related to the allocation of resources.
f. The Steering Committee shall operate in accordance with the principles and decision-making processes outlined in these Terms of Reference.
g. The Steering Committee shall elect Officers, which include a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary through a member-nominated election process.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of Officers
    a. Chair - Provides leadership to the group, sets meeting dates, develops or approves agendas, calls and facilitates meetings. Serves as the primary point of contact and represents the group externally as needed.
    b. Vice-Chair - Supports the Chair and assumes their duties when the Chair is unavailable. May take on specific tasks or projects as delegated.
    c. Treasurer - Oversees the financial management of the group, including tracking contributions and expenditures.
    d. Secretary – Maintains official records. Records and distributes meeting minutes, and ensures communication and documentation are organized and accessible.

6. Meetings
    a. The ABC shall meet a minimum of two times per year. Ideally, in the spring and in the fall.
    b. The Chair calls the meetings and sets the agenda.
    c. Quorum is 50% +1 of voting members.
    d. Voting is decided by a simple majority – 50% plus 1.

7. Funding and Financial Management

a. The Consortium will be funded through a combination of member and non-member contributions, as well as grant funding secured to support its activities.
b. The Alberta Invasive Species Council (AISC) will be responsible for administering all Consortium funds.
c. AISC will provide financial updates at each ABC meeting and prepare a comprehensive financial report for the membership.

8. Reporting and Communication
    a. Members will receive an annual summary of ABC activities, a financial report, and an annual update on biocontrol research progress from the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI).
    b. All documents related to the ABC will be stored in a centralized location accessible to all members.

9. Amendments

    a. Amendments to these Terms of Reference must be presented as a Special Resolution, with the proposed changes circulated to all members at least 21 days in advance of the meeting where the vote will take place. Amendments require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present at a meeting with quorum.

10. Dissolution
    a. If the ABC chooses to dissolve for reasonable and justifiable reasons, dissolution must be approved by a unanimous vote of the Steering Committee. Following dissolution, and after all outstanding obligations are settled, any remaining assets will be distributed to a registered charity or non-profit organization, as determined at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

11. Guidelines for Use of Funds
    a. The Consortium shall develop a prioritized list of invasive plant species for which the development of new biological control agents will be explored.
    b. This list will be submitted to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) first and then to researchers at the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI) for review. CABI will provide feedback on the biocontrol potential of each species and submit preliminary proposals outlining estimated timelines and budgets for the research and development of prospective agents.
    c. A majority vote of the ABC Steering Committee Members is required to approve any expenditures.
    d. All approved funds will be used solely to advance the purpose and objectives of the ABC as outlined in these Terms of Reference.

Alberta Biocontrol Consortium Member Application

Date____________________

Organization____

Type of Organization____

Main Contact: Name____

Main Contact: Email____

Main Contact: Phone____

Alternate Contact (if applicable):

Name____

Alternate Contact:

Email____

Alternate Contact:

Phone____

Organizational Commitment (please agree with the following):

☐ We support the objectives of the Alberta Biocontrol Consortium.

☐ We commit to active participation in meetings and decision-making processes.

☐ We agree to adhere to the principles of collaboration, transparency, and mutual respect.

Membership Term Confirmation

☐ This is a new membership application

☐ This is a renewal of existing membership for the April 1 to March 31, 20_____ year.

Signature____