

Standards, Practices, Performance

Building Confidence and Capacity in the Private Land Conservation Sector

26 Oct 2022

Canadian Land Trust Summit, Ottawa



Centre for Land Conservation

Centre pour la conservation des terres

Outline

- About the Centre for Land Conservation
- Performance Assurance
 - Why?
 - Path we've followed
 - Objectives of the Program
 - How the Program works
 - Key points about the Program
- Forever Protected?



About the Centre for Land Conservation

- Support private land conservation through research, policy and program design for strong and leading-edge practices
 - Whole landscape conservation
- Independent voice to enhance public trust and confidence in private land conservation in Canada
 - Not “representing” land trusts
- Custodian of the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices
 - Support the good work and services being done by others, not duplicate or replace it
 - Independence is a requirement of performance assurance to avoid conflict of interest



Why bother with performance assurance?

- Performance assurance benefits organizations that successfully participate
 - US Land Trust Accreditation Commission 10 year impact evaluation
 - 8X more funding set aside for stewardship and legal defence
 - 5X more land, 3X more volunteers
 - Public and landowner confidence
 - Government support
- Review of performance is the norm for standards and practices initiatives
 - iSeal Alliance Standards for Sustainability
- ESG expectations
 - Funders, investors increasingly expect review of performance
 - Facilitates access to funding
- Will assist in making progress on other private land conservation priorities



How did we get to today?

- Key events:
 - “A National Conversation on Performance Assurance Approaches”, February 2020, Ottawa
 - Program design and priority practice elements, August to October 2020
 - “Ground-truthing”, February to May 2021
- Advice and research
 - Advisory Committee
 - Working Group
 - US Accreditation Commission



Objectives of the Performance Assurance Program

- Support private land conservation organizations to build capacity and capabilities
 - Wish to ensure that organizations can participate successfully
 - Will work with the Alliances and others to help make this happen
- Design and implementation of the program reflects what we've heard
 - Be responsive to the capacity of smaller land trusts
 - Be implemented over a number of years
 - Take into account 'risk'
 - Recognize that some land trusts may wish to proceed more quickly

Program benefits for Land trusts and provincial alliances

- Provides organizations with a template for high quality services, administration and governance
- Enable the identification of strengths and weakness within the organization
- Gives purpose and direction for long-range strategic planning
- Promotes ongoing organizational awareness and improvement
- Gives the organization an opportunity to self-congratulate for quality services provided
- Works as a staff and management team building activity
- Help land trusts build capacity and capabilities
- Documents that the organization is meeting its own organizational objectives



Program benefits for Private funders and governments

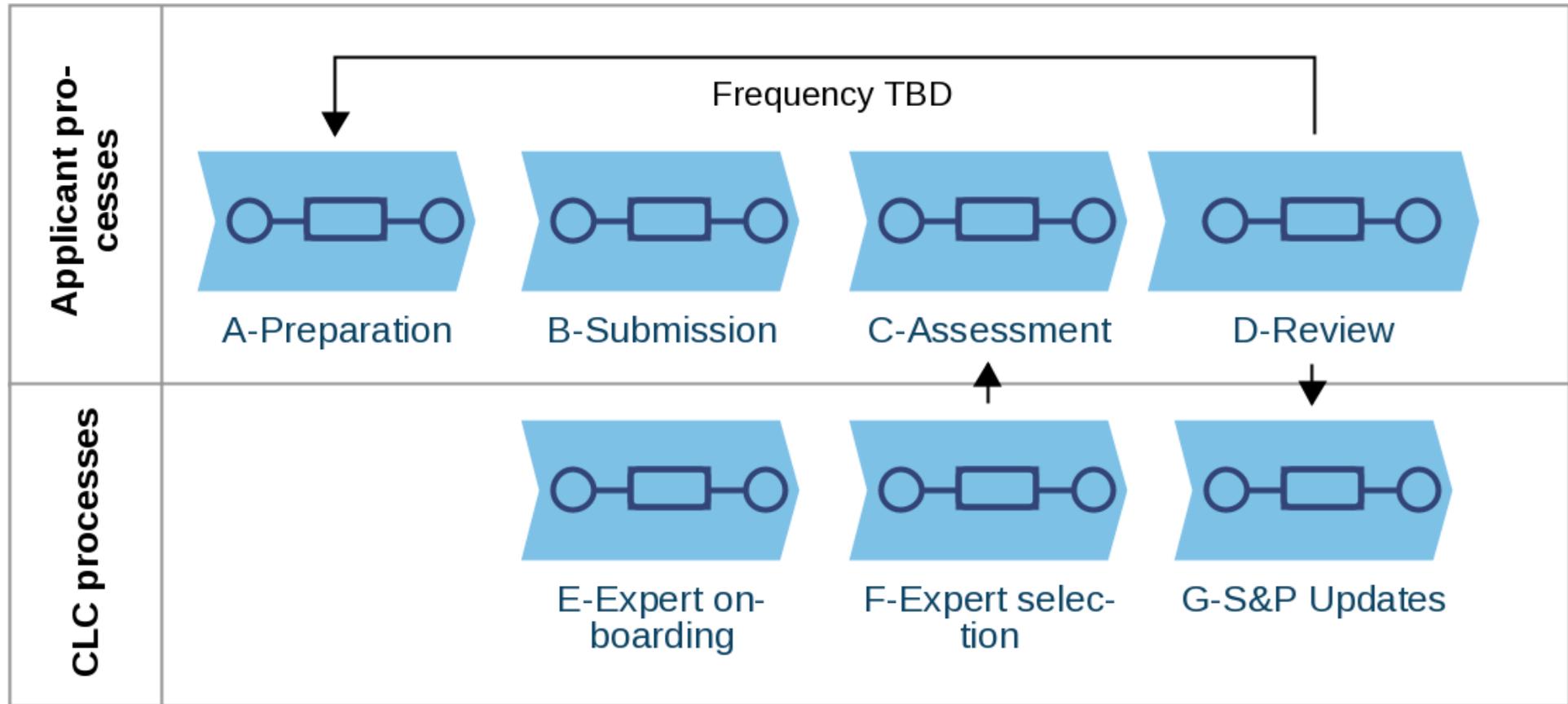
- Provides a credible and independent method of demonstrating effective implementation of sector standards and practices
- Confirms that an organization meets standards of excellence
- Provides public assurance of quality
- Enhance public trust and confidence in private land conservation



Program Principles

- The program should be voluntary and independent of government
- Takes into account the circumstances of all land trusts from large national ones to local volunteer land trusts
- There should be a single level of performance assurance
- Reflects the unique characteristics of the Canadian land trust community
- Not all practice elements with the S&Ps are needed
- The initial program should evaluate a common, smaller number of practice elements
- The program could expand over time to include other elements
- The program should be accessible

Program High-Level Process



A-Preparation

- Assess organizational eligibility and readiness
- Connect with CLC staff with any questions or concerns
- Submit application
- Participate to introductory webinar
- Complete a self-assessment (optional)
- Mentoring or peer learning sessions (optional)
- Connect with CLC staff with any questions or concerns
- Proceed to application



*What is the name of your organization?

*Under which jurisdiction is your organization registered?

*What is your organization's registration number?

*On which date was your organization registered?

*Is one of your core activities the acquisition of land for the purpose of conservation?

Including acquisition of fee-simple lands and/or easements.

Yes No

*Are you committed to the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices?

Yes No

*Are you ready to participate?

Organizations should be prepared to demonstrate that they effectively implement the indicator elements of the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices as outlined in the Application Manual. While the Program is designed to not be too onerous or demanding, it does take work. Organizations should ensure they have a dedicated team member or members to prepare, complete, and submit the necessary evidence for the application.

Yes No

▶ Main point of contact

▶ Secondary point of contact

*Signature

B-Submission

- Assemble required evidence for each indicator element
- Connect with CLC staff with any questions or concerns
- Is the indicator element applicable to your organization?
- Is the required evidence readily available?
- Contact CLC to troubleshoot
- Submit form

▼ Code of ethics

1.A. Ethics

1. Adopt a written code of ethics and/or values statement and adhere to it in implementing the land trust's mission, in its governance and in its operations.

1.C. Community Engagement

1. Develop an inclusive, welcoming organizational culture that respects diversity.

Required evidence

Code of ethics and/or other policy that sets out the organization's values and ethics.

A Board approved policy outlining the organization's professional conduct to uphold its mission and respectful governance and operations. The document should highlight the organization's values and best practices for maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment.

» Evidence

1

Please upload the relevant evidence

Click here to upload file. (< 10MB) 





If needed, please indicate reason for inapplicability



C-Assessment

- Conducted by CLC staff, Team of experts, and a Review committee

D-Review

- Review scorecard
- Provide comments on the scorecard

Practice Element	Document Requirement	Submitted (Y/N)	Evaluation				Comments and Recommendations by the team of experts	Applicant comments
			Satisfactorily implemented	Partially implemented	Not implemented	Not applicable		
1.A1. Ethics - Adopt a written code of ethics and/or values statement and adhere to it in implementing the land trust's mission, in its governance and in its operations	Code of ethics policy or another policy that addresses the organization's set of principles							
1.C1. Community Engagement – Develop an inclusive, welcoming organizational culture that respects diversity								



Program development status

- Program processes have been completed and used to create the Application manual (pending French translation).
- The participant application form and expert application form, have been created.
- Still working on evidence submission form (proof-of-concept) and the Performance Assurance Program Scorecard (end of november 2022).
- Working under the principle that the performance assurance program will only include criteria that are included word for word in the current version of the Standards & Practices.



Performance Assurance Program: Key Points

- Program will review selected practice elements from all 12 Standards
 - “One size fits all”
- Review will be conducted by experts
- Once “scorecard” is completed and reviewed, discussions with the applicant will take place
- No consensus on terminology to be used once performance has been assessed
 - Will refer to organizations as participating in the program or successfully participating in the program
- Outstanding matters
 - Still need to develop a roster of experts including from the land trust sector



Forever Protected? The Potential for Sector-wide Approaches to Stewardship and Legal Defence of Private Conservation Lands

- Report recommended feasibility studies for enhanced stewardship funding and next steps for a shared approach to legal defence
- Wish to put in place a collaborative process with land trusts and others to move forward on key questions and issues to be discussed
- Looking for people who wish to contribute to addressing these long-standing challenges for private land conservation organizations
- Please follow up with an email to info@centreforlandconservation.org
- Report is available on our website



Thank you!

To the organizations who gave their time

Grateful for the funding received from CWS-ECCC

info@centreforlandconservation.org

