

## **Governors' South Atlantic Alliance: Terms of Reference**

### **ORGANIZATION**

**Executive Group** - The Governors of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. The Governors provide strategic vision and guidance to the Steering Group (see below) for developing and implementing plans of action. The Governors will use interstate executive ties to keep Alliance activities connected with other state, regional, and national activities in a complementary manner. The Governors may send a designee to Executive Group meetings.

**Steering Group** - Each Governor will appoint one representative to the Steering Group. The Steering Group representatives shall be senior state policy officials who oversee actions within their respective states that are relevant to the success of the Alliance. Steering Group representatives will serve until such time as new appointments are made by the Governors. The chair of the Steering Group will rotate amongst members. Official representatives of the Supporting Partners, when appropriate, may be invited to serve as members of the Steering Group.

The Steering Group is responsible for planning and organizing the activities of the Alliance. The Steering Group will direct the development and tracking of Action Plans and Alliance priorities, and shall have the authority to eliminate, establish new, or modify priority issue areas and teams. Each Steering Group member will select a technical lead from within their state for each Issue Area Technical Team.

The Executive Planning Team, consisting of policy representatives of the four states and interested Supporting Partners, was organized in 2007 to initiate efforts to develop the South Atlantic Alliance and draft Alliance materials for consideration and use by the Executive Group and Steering Group in overseeing activities and actions of the Alliance. With adoption of the Governors South Atlantic Alliance, the Executive Planning Team will serve as a transitional body for developing materials and planning actions until formalization of the Steering Group.

**Issue Area Technical Teams** - Issue Area Technical Teams are established to develop and implement issue area goals, objectives, strategies, actions, and schedules. This will be done through the development of issue specific implementation plans. As noted above, each Steering Group member will select a technical lead from within their state to serve on each Issue Area Technical Team. Each Issue Area Technical Team will be chaired by one of the four state representatives, determined by state members of each Team. Interested Supporting Partners are invited to designate a liaison for each issue area to work directly with and support each state-led Issue Area Technical Team.

Technical Teams will refine the initiatives and related tasks/products necessary to successfully implement the Governors Action Plan. Technical Teams will integrate policy, socio-economic, and science requirements by identifying opportunities and actions that will influence identified issues, produce solutions of mutual use and multiple benefits, and result in regional outcomes.

**Supporting Partners** - Supporting Partners consist of federal, local, academic, nongovernmental organization (NGO), regional organizations, and private sector entities. Supporting Partners will bring resources (e.g., people, time, funding, equipment, and technology) and technical and policy expertise to Alliance activities (Steering Group and Technical Teams) to complement issues of mutual interest. The Supporting Partners will also seek to integrate Alliance priorities into complementary actions taken by their respective organizations.

## **PRODUCTS**

**Governors South Atlantic Alliance Action Plan** - To ensure transparency and accountability, the Alliance will publish a *Governors South Atlantic Alliance Action Plan*. This plan will be reviewed annually for progress and updated every five years for content. The Action Plan will focus on priority issue areas that all four member states identify as being of mutual interest and likely to benefit from regional collaboration. It will be action-based, contain clear goals, measurable objectives, and integrated strategies for achievement. Public involvement will be encouraged and facilitated during the development of the regional plan and any individual state or other supporting plan. The Action Plan will guide actions of both the Steering Committee and the Issue Area Technical Teams. It will be updated and revised on a five-year basis.

**Governors South Atlantic Alliance Implementation Plans** – Each Issue Area Technical Team will develop an implementation plan that identifies specific activities that will be carried out in support of the goals, objectives, and strategies identified in the Action Plan. The Implementation Plan will specify, as appropriate, what the activity is, who will conduct the activity, where and how the activity will be conducted, a timeline for completion, and an expected set of outcomes. Each Implementation Plan will cover activities over a 12-18 month period and be considered a living document.