The Conservation Finance Network

CFN Strategic Plan (2026-2031)

CFN was founded on the principle of creating a "community of practice" to scale the conservation of land and natural resources. Since our founding in 2007, we have engaged thousands of practitioners through in-person and remote trainings and coaching, and dissemination of online information about best practices in conservation finance. Our practitioner network spans the nonprofit, public and private sectors and addresses traditional land protection, water quality and quantity, habitat restoration, and green infrastructure, and more – primarily in the US.

Today, the field faces a pivotal moment. The twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss demand solutions that are more creative, scalable, and equitable than ever before. The field of conservation finance has matured – in part because of CFN's work – and practitioners are no longer just asking "what is it?" but "how do we do it bigger, better, faster, and in my sector?"

To meet these challenges, CFN will engage and expand our diverse practitioner network to expand the use of cutting-edge funding and financing strategies.

Vision Statement

We envision a world in which nature has value, and its services are incorporated into economic decision-making for the benefit of all.

Mission Statement

The Conservation Finance Network (CFN) advances land and resource conservation by cultivating a vibrant community of nonprofit, public and private sector practitioners that shares best practices and expands the use and replication of innovative and effective funding and financing strategies.

CFN's Four Key Pillars

CFN's new plan builds on four key pillars over the next five years:

Goal 1: CONVENE the field with targeted, high-impact learning opportunities.

- **Enhance In-Person Convenings:** We will organize five hybrid Conservation Finance Boot Camps for early practitioners; up to eight in-person Conservation Finance Roundtables for mid- and seasoned-career leaders; and 3-5 specialized trainings annually on key topics (e.g., ecosystem markets, interim finance). We will also explore developing convenings focused on specific issues or landscapes.

- **Expand Online Learning:** We will continue our *Nature's Returns* webinar series on conservation finance topics (five annually) and expand online training opportunities for early-career practitioners to prepare them for more advanced offerings.

Goal 2: CONNECT practitioners with information, tools, best practices, and each other.

- **Foster Vibrant Peer-to-Peer Exchange:** We will launch programs including informal coffee "klatches," structured "Ask the Expert" sessions, and "mentor/mentee" pairings.
- **Build a Robust Information Resource:** We will revamp CFN's website to become a dynamic field resource, introducing a blog highlighting innovation, collaboration, replication and leadership and featuring curated partner content. We will refine our monthly E-News to amplify partner content, launch a funder newsletter, and double our E-list subscriptions. A robust CRM will help us track engagement, deepen relationships, and identify collaboration opportunities.
- **Support Conservation Finance Programming by Aligned Partners:** Where appropriate, we will provide specific conservation finance guidance to or co-brand with other initiatives.

Goal 3: COACH practitioners to implement high-impact projects.

- **Strengthen "Circuit-Riding" Assistance:** We will deepen our partnerships with philanthropic and, where appropriate, public agencies to deliver project-level coaching and technical assistance.
- **Increase Coaching Capacity:** We will build our coaching capacity – and that of our partners– to help move promising nonprofit and private sector projects toward implementation.
- **Foster Ambassadorship:** We will develop a "train-the-trainer" model, enabling Boot Camp attendees to share learning with colleagues and multiply our reach.

Goal 4: CATALYZE field-wide action on emerging opportunities and challenges.

- **Advance the Field Through Targeted Working Groups:** We will establish and lead working groups to advance the understanding and application of specific financing tools. Initial priorities include Nature-Based Solutions and Interim Finance, with future groups to explore endowments and indigenous-led conservation finance.
- **Equip the Field with New Tools and Analysis:** We will share and, where appropriate, help commission reports on key trends; develop toolkits and case studies with our university partners; and explore the development of an online training course.

As a lean and nimble network, CFN will deliver on our mission through partnerships with universities and nonprofits organizations. We rely on a vibrant distributed network of at least 75 contributors—including Steering Committee members, students, and practitioners – who collectively donate at least 500 hours annually as speakers, coaches, researchers, and writers.