

Different Goals One Planet Same Mission.

A case study of NGO collaboration in Hampton Roads

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The Earth Viability Center (EVC)

A global effort to support a sustainable and equitable future

WHO THEY ARE	
	<p>Non-profit 501(c)(3) The Earth Viability Center, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation registered in Virginia, USA.</p>
	<p>Vision A future where we meet our needs while safeguarding the Earth's life-support system on which the welfare of all life depends; a future where we have an inclusive society embracing justice, equity, and the rich diversity of humans.</p>
	<p>Mission The Earth Viability Center (EVC) supports an informed Global Citizen Movement to bring humanity back into balance with nature and ensure a future where the basic needs of all people are met while safeguarding the Earth's life-support system.</p>
	<p>Values Justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our work and the future we envision.</p>
	<p>Supporters Tiawah Inc, Grenada and Germany.</p>

WHAT THEY DO	
	<p>Facilitate an informed Global Citizen Movement (GCM) Bringing together the many groups and organizations working to bring humanity back into balance with nature and ensure a future where the basic needs of all people are met while safeguarding the Earth's life-support system.</p>
	<p>Develop and maintain the Place4Us platform A virtual companion of the GCM that facilitates community-building and the interconnection and collaboration of communities working to heal the Earth's life-support system.</p>
	<p>Support the integration and dissemination of scientific knowledge Share the best available scientific knowledge on the Earth's life-support system (ELSS) and inform the public and decision makers through tools like the Earth Viability Dashboard and the Place4Us community.</p>
	<p>Contribute to actions and facilitate projects Promote a society that embraces justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring access to knowledge and education to meet our needs while protecting the purpose of the systems that constitute the ELSS.</p>

Applying Research to Practice: My Internship Role

Ngo Collaboration & Systems Coordination in Hampton Roads

My Role in Supporting NGO Collaboration

Engage with Environmental organizations in Hampton Roads

Analyze collaboration patterns between NGOs

Identify and analyze barriers to organizational coordination

Help make Place4Us a more effective and appealing space for NGO collaboration

Support the coordination and connection of stakeholder efforts



Research



Insight



Application

Why Coordination Matters

Identifies gaps in communication and coordination

Supports more aligned and effective environmental efforts

Helps shift from isolated work to collaborative impact

Contributes to building a shared system for sustainability

Connects real world practice to systems-based solutions

A Wicked Problem: Fragmented Environmental Action

The challenge is not a lack of effort.....
It's a **lack of coordination.**

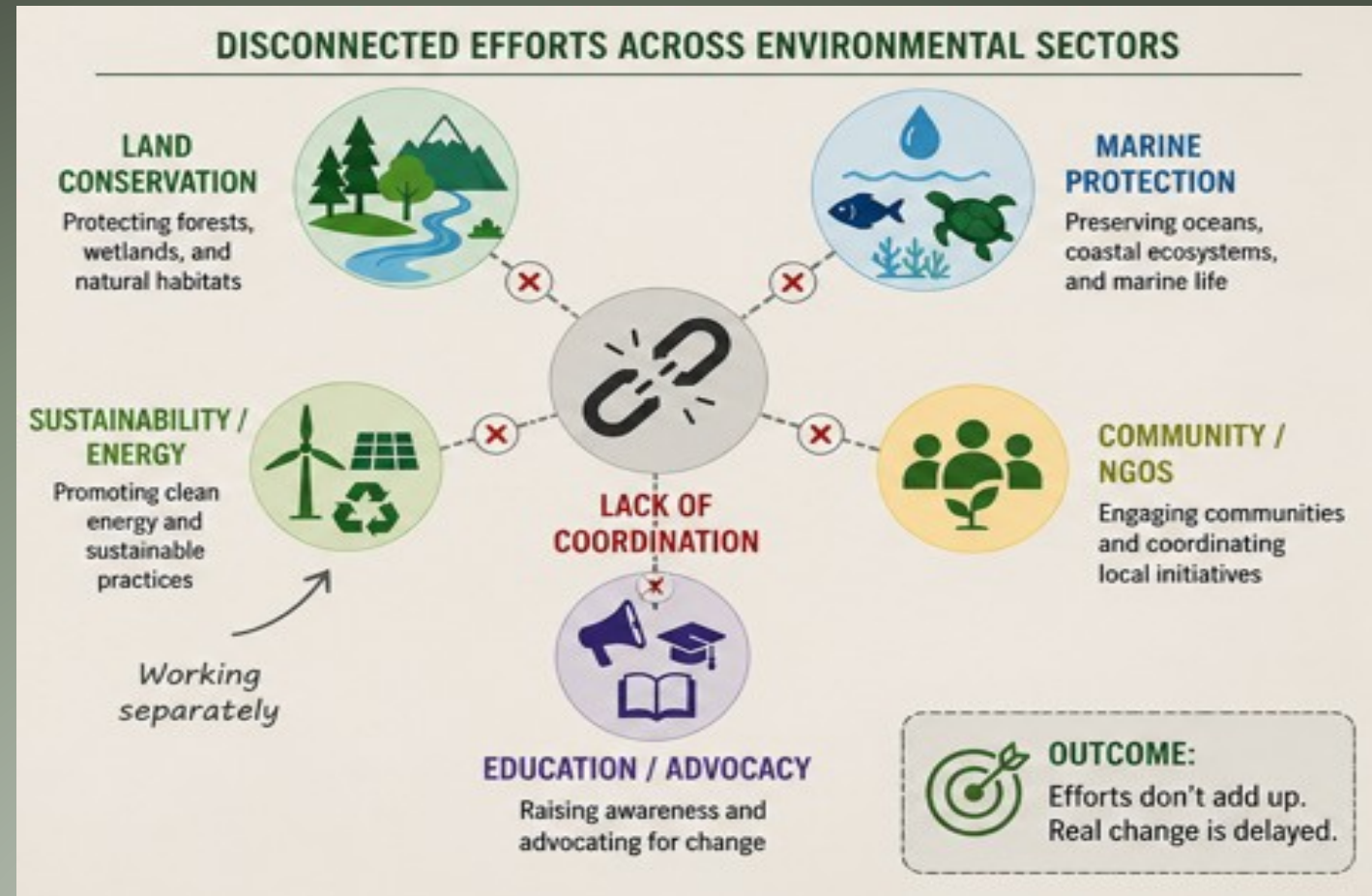
Why this means

Organizations share the same goal:
sustaining the planet

They operate in silos with different
priorities, funding, and strategies

Efforts are duplicated, opportunities are
missed

Impact is limited



Fragilities Undermining NGO Coordination



Key Points

- High Impact fragilities (red) **directly block collaboration** across organizations
- Structural and funding constraints **shape behavior** and limit cooperation
- Weak coordination **reduces the ability** to address wicked "cross sector" problems

Hazards of poor NGO coordination

When coordination breaks down, effort is fragmented, impact is weakened, and environmental and social goals are put at risk

1 Environmental gaps and delayed ecosystem protection

Critical habitats and species are left unprotected, threats worsen, and recovery is delayed.



2 Inequitable and inconsistent community outcomes

Uneven support, mixed messages, and low trust lead to confusion, disengagement, and unmet needs.



3 Wasted resources and reduced funding effectiveness

Duplication, overlap, and inefficiencies waste resources and erode donor confidence.



4 Fragmented knowledge and weak decision-making

Data silos, poor information sharing, and limited learning lead to weak, uninformed decisions and missed opportunities.

















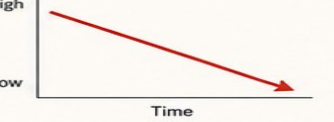

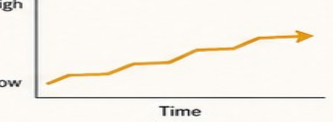
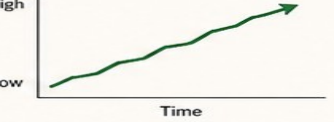
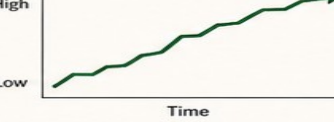
5 Inability to address complex, cross-sector environmental problems

Wicked problems like climate change, biodiversity loss, and water quality require collective action that fragmented efforts cannot achieve.



The system produces effort, not transformation

SPECTRUM OF POSSIBLE FUTURES FOR NGO COORDINATION

	 System Breakdown	 Competitive Fragmentation	 Incremental Coordination	 Platform-Enabled Collaboration	 Adaptive Network Governance
 What drives it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding cuts Crisis response only No long-term vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition for funding Branding and visibility focus Siloed priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of inefficiencies Desire to collaborate Limited resources for change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in shared platform (Place4Us) Willingness to share data and resources Community engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong, shared vision Inclusive governance Data-driven decision making Long-term commitment
 Who is acting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGOs act alone Organizations collapse or exit No coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual NGOs Donors reinforce silos Agencies work in isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some NGOs form partnerships Small coalitions emerge Limited stakeholder engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGOs collaborate Communities engaged Platform and tech partners support Funders incentivize collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGOs, government, and communities aligned Shared leadership Cross-sector partnerships
 Key outcomes	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects fail Loss of trust Environmental decline Communities lose support 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplicated efforts Wasted funding Confusion for communities Limited or short-term impact 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some efficiency gains Better information sharing Uneven outcomes across regions and communities 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared data and resources Reduced duplication Coordinated projects Stronger community outcomes Increased funding effectiveness 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated strategy across issues Systems-level change Resilient ecosystems and communities Long-term sustainability and impact
 System trajectory	<p>Collapse of coordination</p> 	<p>Fragmented and competitive system</p> 	<p>Slow improvement</p> 	<p>Accelerating collaboration</p> 	<p>Fully integrated system</p> 

-  Desirable future
-  Middle
-  Undesirable
-  System failure

Futures are not predictions. They show how today's coordination choices shape collective environmental impact

Interventions

Use Place4Us to help NGOs move from fragmented effort to collective impact, by connecting, sharing, and working together for a healthy planet and thriving communities

INTERVENTION OPTIONS

1



Shared Collaboration Board

Central board where NGOs post projects, needs, updates, and opportunities to collaborate.

2



Central Hub & Newsletter

A main hub curates and distributes a regular newsletter with key updates, events, and opportunities across the network.

3



Resource & Opportunity Exchange

Share resources, volunteers, data, tools, and funding opportunities to reduce duplication and increase efficiency.

4



Shared Calendar & Events

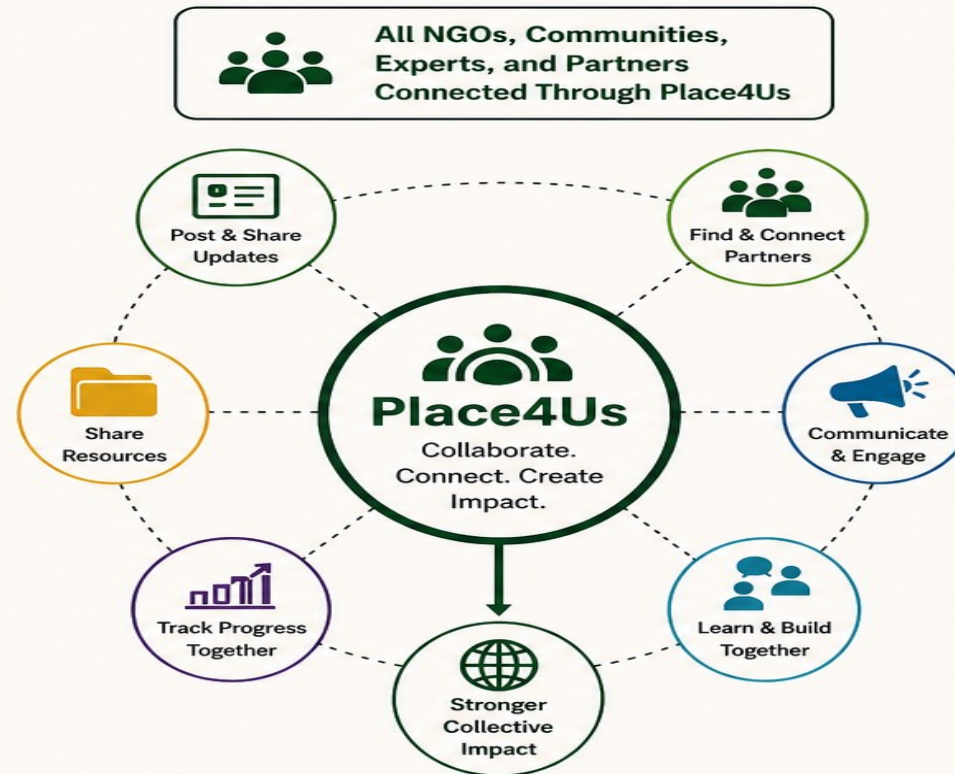
One calendar to highlight events, trainings, meetings, and deadlines across organizations.

5



Impact Dashboard

Track collective progress with shared metrics and stories of impact to strengthen accountability and trust.



SUPPORTING FEATURES OF PLACE4US



Virtual Community Centers (VCCs)

Each organization or community has its own space (floors) for projects, discussions, workshops, and governance.



Cross-Sector & Cross-Scale Links

Connect locally and globally with other VCCs working on related issues.



Safe, Inclusive & Non-Polarizing Environment

Designed to foster respectful dialogue, inclusion, and solution-focused collaboration.



Shared Governance Tools

Tools for transparent decision-making, consensus-building, and accountable governance.



Open, Non-Profit & Protected Infrastructure

Place4Us is a non-profit public infrastructure protected from commercial takeover and governed in the common good.

ENABLING PRINCIPLES



Inclusiveness

Everyone has a voice; diversity of people, ideas, and perspectives strengthens solutions.



Transparency

Open information and clear processes build trust and accountability.



Collaboration

We achieve more together than we can alone.



Equity

Fair access and representation for all communities.



Sustainability

Protecting the Earth's life-support system for present and future generations.