Environmental Funding Programs

EcoAction Community Funding Program

Applicant's Guide
2023/2024

Canada

About the *Applicant's Guide*

The *Applicant's Guide* is designed to assist eligible organizations in applying to the EcoAction Community Funding Program. You are welcome to contact your Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) Regional Office if you require clarification on the information contained in this guide.

Regional Office Contact Information

Environment and Climate Change Canada EcoAction Regional Offices	
Atlantic & Québec Region *Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Québec* **E-mail:** *EcoAction.Quebec.Atlantic@ec.gc.ca*	**West & North Region** *Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon* **E-mail:** ecoactionouestnord-ecoactionwestnorth@ec.gc.ca
Ontario Region **E-mail:** EcoAction.Ontario@ec.gc.ca	
Grants and Contributions Enterprise Management System (GCEMS) For GCEMS technical assistance: **E-mail:** sgesc-gcems-sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca	

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EcoAction Community Funding Program

ECCC's EcoAction Community Funding Program provides financial support to community groups for action-based projects that have measurable, positive impacts on the environment. Projects must address EcoAction's Fresh Water Priority Result as listed in the Call for Proposals. Funding support may be requested for projects that have an action focus to improve the environment and increase environmental awareness and capacity in the community.

Program Requirements

Core Requirements

All projects must clearly demonstrate that activities are measurable and will result in positive environmental impacts. All projects **must include**:

- activities that will lead to tangible environmental results **within the timeframe of the project**;
- opportunities for community members to take action;
- at least one (1) **environmental** indicator AND one (1) **capacity building** indicator as per the list of performance indicators listed in Annex B; and
- a description of how project results and engagement will be sustained after the completion of EcoAction funding.

Funding Requirements

At least 50% of the total value of your project must come from sources **other than the Government of Canada**. An exception to this requirement are funds from programs for Indigenous Peoples within Indigenous Services Canada. These funds may be included as matching funding for the project.

Please note: Funding from employment support programs within Employment and Social Development Canada are also exempt from this requirement; however, they **cannot** be used as matching funding for the project. Please contact your Regional Office for more information.

Contributions to your project from sources other than the Government of Canada may be in the form of cash, in-kind support, or a combination of both. In-kind support may include donations of:

- equipment, materials and/or office space;
- volunteer time for project activities, coordination or professional services;
- expertise from consultants, Elders or academics;
- incentives, e.g., discounts offered on purchased items and services; and

- any other donated goods or services that contribute to covering the costs of the project.

For example, a company may donate $500 worth of native perennial plants or members of a local community group may volunteer 400 hours of their time to work on your project. These are considered in-kind contributions toward your project and are attributed a fair market monetary value.

Please Note: The value of the land on which work will be completed and/or the purchase of land cannot be considered as part of the matched funding requirement for the project.

Community Support and Involvement Requirements

Project proposals must demonstrate support and involvement of community members. The EcoAction Community Funding Program is designed to provide Canadians with a way to become involved in the creation of more sustainable communities through the delivery of action-based projects that yield measurable, positive environmental results. Through funded projects, Canadians are equipped with the tools they need to act on their knowledge and values as individuals and members of communities in support of environmental sustainability.

For example, an applicant submitting a community project aimed at improving watershed health and water quality by engaging landowners and volunteers is encouraged to submit, along with their application, letters demonstrating support including cash and/or in-kind contributions from the community and their project partners.

Applicants are encouraged to include a Knowledge Transfer component to their project. Knowledge Transfer is "a process of sharing information, experience or knowledge, during an EcoAction funded project, which encourages sustainable behaviour changes for the protection of fresh water in Canada."

General Applicant and Application Information

Who may apply?

Non-profit and non-governmental groups and organizations are eligible to receive funding through the EcoAction Community Funding Program. Examples of eligible groups include:

- environmental groups;
- community groups;
- youth and seniors groups;
- community-based associations; and
- service clubs.

Indigenous organizations such as governments, boards, commissions, communities, associations and authorities are also eligible to receive funding, including:

- Indigenous not-for-profit organizations; and
- District councils, Chiefs councils, Treaty councils, and Tribal councils.

The following groups are **not eligible** but are encouraged to partner with eligible organizations to support a project proposal:

- businesses;
- educational institutions;
- C3 organizations;
- Crown corporations;
- individuals; and
- municipal, provincial, and territorial governments.

What projects may be funded?

Your project must address the following **FRESH WATER** Priority Result:

> **Canadians contribute to improving freshwater quality through actions that reduce harmful substances in fresh water and/or restore and protect freshwater ecosystem health.**

Projects focused on brackish water and saltwater activities will not be considered for funding.

The EcoAction Community Funding Program funds projects that have a local, regional or national scope.

What are the maximum and minimum of EcoAction contributions?

EcoAction can provide a funding contribution of up to 50% of eligible project expenditures up to a maximum of $100,000. The minimum funding request is $25,000.

For every dollar you receive from the Government of Canada, including the EcoAction Community Funding Program, you must obtain at least the same amount from non-federal government partners. This includes cash contributions and in-kind support. **Please note:** All contributor funding used to meet the 1:1 matching funding requirement must be incurred during the ECCC funding project dates.

Requests for EcoAction funding that exceed $100,000 or are less than $25,000 **will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding**.

What is the maximum duration of a project?

The maximum duration of EcoAction funding to a project is 36 consecutive months. Applications for EcoAction funding in excess of 36 months will be deemed ineligible. At the end of the 36 month timeframe, projects will be required to report on their project outcomes and results associated with EcoAction indicators. Please ensure that the target project indicators included in your application are achievable within the timeframe of EcoAction funding. When completing your application in GCEMS, you will be asked to explain how targets were calculated.

We anticipate that EcoAction funding will not start before summer 2023; however the project may start earlier than this time using funds from other contributors. **Please note:** Any and all project funding used prior to, or after, the approved EcoAction funding period cannot be considered as part of the matching funding contribution.

What project costs are eligible?

The following project costs are **eligible** under EcoAction:
- human resource costs, including salaries and benefits;
- contractors;
- management and professional service costs (e.g., accounting, audit, liability insurance costs directly attributed to carrying out the project, monitoring, legal or other professional fees, translation);
- travel and field costs (based on Government of Canada rates: NJC Travel Directive);
- materials and supplies costs;
- communication, production, distribution and printing costs;

- equipment purchase or rental costs;
- vehicle rental and operation costs; and
- a reasonable share of overhead and/or administrative costs (e.g., office supplies, rent) directly attributed to project delivery.

For examples of expenditures for each of the above listed categories, please see Annex B.

What projects, activities and costs cannot be funded?

The following projects, activities, and costs are **not eligible** for EcoAction funding:

- projects already underway*;
- continuation of projects previously funded by EcoAction (if the project is a subsequent phase of a previously completed project, it must be clear how this phase has a different set of project goals, objectives, indicators, costs and activities);
- ongoing programs and activities offered by your organization;
- activities required by law and/or mandated by any levels of government;
- projects related to the enforcement of, or compliance with, by-laws in effect;
- projects designed only to beautify an area;
- project activities that fall under the mandate of other government funding programs, including other ECCC funding programs*;
- political lobbying, advocacy or fundraising activities (or those activities that may be perceived as such)*;
- purchase of a vehicle (can however be used as matching funding from other contributors for the portion used for project activities as stated in the application);
- incentives and rebates (can however be used as matching funding from other contributors);
- further disbursement of funds to a third party recipient (i.e., micro grants) (can however be used as matching funding from other contributors);
- projects outside of Canada; and
- Projects primarily focused on and/or expenses associated with:
  - the purchase of capital assets (i.e., a tangible asset costing $10,000 or more and has a useful life of more than one year);
  - studies, research and monitoring activities (environmental issues to be addressed via project activities should already be known and researched and the applicant ready to take measurable and positive actions);
  - planning;
  - the preparation of formal curriculum materials;

- o core organizational functions (e.g., meetings, maintenance and administration);
- o annual or regular organizational events/campaigns;
- o attending general conferences;
- o recreational purposes;
- o the construction of infrastructure (e.g., buildings, roads and bridges) with the exception of projects related to natural infrastructure (wetlands, publically accessible rain gardens, etc.);
- o the decontamination of sites; and
- o land acquisition (the value of the land on which work will be completed and/or the purchase of land cannot be considered as part of the matched funding requirement for the Program).

*For details on ineligible project activities and expenditures related to projects underway, activities mandated by law, and political lobbying, advocacy and fundraising activities, please see Annex C.

If you are unsure about the eligibility of your project, project activities or related costs, please contact your ECCC Regional Office.

How do you apply?

You are encouraged to submit your application in the official language of your choice. All applications must be submitted using the Grants and Contributions Enterprise Management System (GCEMS). Should you be unable to submit your application using this platform, or if you are experiencing challenges using GCEMS please contact your ECCC Regional Office for alternative submission options.

STEP 1 **Prepare your ONLINE application package**

The application form must be completed using GCEMS which includes a technical guide to assist you when using this tool. **Please ensure you allow yourself ample time to enter all of the project information into the system before the application deadline.** Please also refer to Annex B for detailed instructions on information to include in your application and Annex D for detailed instructions on how to complete the budget section in GCEMS.

For examples of previously funded projects, we encourage you to refer to the EcoAction Map on our Website.

STEP 2 Submit your completed application VIA GCEMS

Applications will **ONLY** be accepted through the ECCC online application system, GCEMS*.

*Note:

- **All** applications **must** be completed and submitted via [GCEMS](), unless otherwise discussed with an ECCC Regional Office.
- Packages will **not** be accepted via email, mail, and fax or by building security, unless otherwise discussed with an ECCC Regional Office.
- Additional information received after the application deadline will **NOT** be taken into consideration with the exception of letters of support confirming contributor funding and partnerships already identified in your application, which may be submitted after the deadline via email to your ECCC Regional Office.

For any questions, please consult with your ECCC Regional Office.

What makes for a strong application?

A strong application includes the following elements:

- enhances, restores, conserves and/or protects the environment;
- includes objectives that are realistic, achievable and measurable;
- clearly demonstrates the linkage of the funding request and associated activities to the Fresh Water Priority Result and selected indicator results;
- demonstrates direct and measurable environmental benefit and describes how that benefit will be sustained beyond EcoAction funding completion;
- provides an opportunity for community members to become actively engaged in the project activities and educates them on environmental issues;
- clearly demonstrates that the group has the ability to carry out the project;
- demonstrates good value for money;
- includes information related to permits and technical information to ensure reviewers are able to evaluate the feasibility of the project, its technical merit, environmental benefits, and compliance with jurisdictional requirements;
- if applicable, includes supporting documentation to adequately evaluate project activities or information to conduct an environmental screening;
- has a strong community engagement and education component including the methodology to measure the extent to which behavioural change will be achieved within the timeframe of the project, e.g., pre- and post-project surveys; and

- includes a Knowledge Transfer component. Knowledge Transfer is described as "a process of sharing information, experience or knowledge, during an EcoAction funded project, which encourages sustainable behaviour changes for the protection of fresh water in Canada."

What will happen next?

Review

EcoAction project funding decisions are based on an annual open Call for Proposal process. If received by the deadline, your completed application will go through a three-stage review process:

STAGE 1 - Administrative review by program staff to confirm eligibility. Projects that are deemed not eligible will be notified at the end of this stage.
Some criteria that may deem a project ineligible include:

- eligibility of the applicant;
- duration of project;
- minimum/maximum funding amount requested;
- at least one environmental indicator and one capacity building indicator has not been selected;
- matching funding requirements; and
- project location.

STAGE 2 - Technical review by subject-matter experts to confirm scientific and technical feasibility of your project.

STAGE 3 - Regional review and assessment of eligible projects by program staff. Projects are assessed against, but are not limited to, the following criteria:

- relevance of the project to the achievement of the program Priority Result and how realistic it is for the project to achieve that Priority Result;
- demonstration of the feasibility of achieving positive environmental impact at the end of the project (e.g., demonstrates clear environmental benefits and, where applicable, social, economic and health benefits);
- demonstration of how the project will respond to clearly defined and demonstrable environmental needs and benefits;
- evidence of community involvement and support;

- inclusion of a Knowledge Transfer strategy that encourages sustainable behaviour changes;
- feasibility and quality of the work plan and budget for the proposed activities including a description of the issue(s) or problem(s), approach to be taken, attainable expected results and scope;
- description of evaluation and performance measures to be implemented (e.g., a clear set of expected, measurable results);
- explanation of the potential for self-sustaining continuity of the project and how benefits to the environment and community will be sustained after the project is completed; and
- demonstration of strong partnerships and engagement with EcoAction priority groups: Indigenous, Youth, and Small Businesses.

Notification

Once departmental conditional approvals have been confirmed, all applicants (both successful and unsuccessful) will be notified in writing. If your project is approved in principle, you will be contacted to negotiate a Contribution Agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of the funding. Please refer to the EcoAction website for more information. Federal MPs and/or their team may be advised about the approval in principle of a project and may be provided with information provided in this Application including applicant's name, project title, project description, project location, funding amounts and contact information.

Annex A – Application Checklist

Before submitting your application, check to make sure it is complete and eligible by using the following checklist:

- applicant is eligible;
- request is a minimum of $25,000 up to a maximum of $100,000 in ECCC EcoAction funding;
- at least 50% of the total project value comes from sources other than the Government of Canada;
- project is 36 consecutive months or less in duration;
- at least one (1) environmental indicator AND one (1) capacity building indicator has been selected;
- project addresses EcoAction's Fresh Water Priority Result as listed in the Call for Proposals;
- complete and electronically signed application in GCEMS* form, which includes a detailed budget, work plan, communications and evaluation plan with measurable key performance indicators; and
- project activities are not listed in the section: "what projects, activities and costs cannot be funded."

*Unless other submission arrangements have been made with an ECCC Regional Office.

Annex B - What information to include in the application

For technical support, please refer to the GCEMS Guide and/or email: sgesc-gcems-sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca

TOMBSTONE DATA

Provide your organization and contact information, including the full legal name, a brief description of your organization, your organization's mandate, years of operation, governance structure and management capacity. Provide the main project contact information; this individual must be knowledgeable of the content of the project proposal.

PROJECT SUMMARY

In this section, all project information is required, such as the title, expected start and end dates, location, goals/objectives, project description, human resources and project team experience.

Project Title

Provide a title for your project.

Start Date and End Date

Project start dates will vary. We anticipate that EcoAction funding will start no earlier than summer 2023.

Project Location

Longitude and Latitude: Enter the longitude and latitude of the location in which your project activities will take place. If your project activities will take place in multiple locations, enter the main project location or the headquarters of your organization.

Project Goals and Objectives

Clearly state the objective(s) and goal(s) of the project. Describe how the achievement of the goals will be measured.

Project Description

Provide a summary description of your project, showing the link between the project, the stated goals and the program objectives.

Project Team Experience

Describe any relevant qualifications and experience of the project team members to demonstrate the organization's skills, knowledge and capacity to carry out the proposed project.

Financial Capacity

Describe your organization's financial capacity to undertake this project. This could include defining the other sources of funding for your project.

Project Management Capacity

Describe your organization's experience in managing and delivering projects. Identify relevant qualifications and experience of the project team members to demonstrate the group's experience and capacity to carry out the project.

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Complete this module to add more specific information about your project not already included in the Project Summary section.

Environmental Issue

Describe the environmental issue your project will address and its link to the 2023-2024 key environmental priority of Fresh Water (approximately 500 words).

Project Need

Describe why the project is needed within the local, regional and/or national context including any current actions that have been undertaken to address this environmental issue by your organization or others (approximately 500 words).

- Add current and relevant baseline information that is informing your project need and supporting activities and key performance indicators. You may reference research, studies, regional plans developed by regional stakeholders, etc.

Project Distinction

Please describe how this project is incremental or differs from your organization's core and/or current activities. For additional guidance on this question, please refer to Annex C.

EcoAction Priority Result

Describe how the proposed project activities will deliver positive environmental results related to the Priority Result.

EcoAction Priority Groups

Preference will be given to proposals that engage Indigenous Peoples, youth (up to 24 years of age), and/or partner with small businesses.

Identify the ECCC priority groups that your project engages by selecting "Yes" or "No" in the drop-down menu. For each selected priority group, provide in the text box one or two sentences describing how the proposed project activities would support collaboration, engagement and participation. Note that buying from a small business is not considered as partnership and engagement with small businesses. The priority group has to be involved in achieving the project objectives to be considered engaged. For example, a local market may support the project by hosting workshops on water conservation.

Project Purpose

Please complete the following sentence summarizing your project's purpose, "This freshwater project will…" (answer in 50 words or less).

Your sentence should include the project location and a clear summary of key project goals.

Example: This fresh water project will improve water quality through restoration and improvement of freshwater aquatic habitat in the _____ watershed by (list main activities).

Project Activity Work Plan

This section allows you to include all necessary activities related to the project work plan (approximately 8-15 activities). In addition to an activity title and description of the activity, provide the expected result of the activity (i.e., please include the reason you are conducting this activity, the desired outcome and the measureable result). For activity description and expected result entries, provide approximately 100 words per activity; no more than 250 words.

Lastly, for each activity, identify the general timeframe of the activity (start and end dates).

For recurring activities, please list that activity one time indicating the original activity start date and final activity end date. For these recurring activities, please list expected results per individual fiscal year.

Permits

It is your responsibility to verify requirements and obtain any permits and/or approvals from other federal, provincial/territorial and/or municipal governments prior to the commencement of activities. The required permits and authorizations for the project must be identified in this section, if applicable. Start by confirming the requirement for any permits and authorizations by selecting "Yes" or "No" in the drop-down menu. If you select yes, list all permits and indicate whether they have been obtained. If not yet obtained, ensure the timeline for obtaining these approvals are included in your project's work plan.

Please identify if your project, or a portion of your project will take place on Federal Lands, as defined below by selecting "Yes" or "No". According to the *Impact Assessment Act*, **federal lands** are defined as:

(a) lands that belong to Her Majesty in right of Canada, or that Her Majesty in right of Canada has the power to dispose of, and all waters on and airspace above those lands, other than lands under the administration and control of the Commissioner of Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut;

(b) the following lands and areas:

(i) the internal waters of Canada, in any area of the sea not within a province;

(ii) the territorial sea of Canada, in any area of the sea not within a province;

(iii) the exclusive economic zone of Canada;

(iv) the continental shelf of Canada; and,

(c) reserves, surrendered lands and any other lands that are set apart for the use and benefit of a band and that are subject to the *Indian Act*, and all waters on and airspace above those reserves or lands. (territoire domanial)

Project Communications Plan

Describe how the community will be informed of project activity results and/or be invited to participate in project activities (approximately five activities). Include a list of communication products that will be created and released (e.g., public events, news releases, publications, websites, social media, etc.). For activity description and expected result entries, provide approximately 100 words per activity; no more than 250 words.

For recurring activities, please list that activity one time indicating the original activity start date and final activity end date. For these recurring activities, please list expected results per individual fiscal year.

Applicants are encouraged to include a Knowledge Transfer component to their project. Knowledge Transfer is described as "a process of sharing information, experience or knowledge, during an EcoAction funded project, which encourages sustainable behaviour changes for the protection of fresh water in Canada." In the Communications Plan section describe the Knowledge Transfer component of your project and link it to the capacity building indicators: # of participants and # of people reached.

Project Evaluation Plan

Outline the methodology that will be used to measure the project's expected results and key performance indicators (approximately five activities). For activity description and expected result entries, provide approximately 100 words per activity; no more than 250 words.

For recurring activities, please list that activity one time indicating the original activity start date and final activity end date. For these recurring activities, please list expected results per individual fiscal year.

Note: Projects that have strong community engagement and education components must include a methodology to measure the extent to which behavioural change will be achieved (e.g., before and after surveys).

Key Performance Indicators

Select all EcoAction Key Performance Indicators that apply to your project and present the target value as a **whole number** for each of the selected key performance indicators that the project will be measured against and describe how these estimates were calculated in the related text box. Please review the unit of measurement required by the Program. Note that Program indicators refer to hectares and not m^2. Please ensure that your target project indicators are achievable within the timeframe of EcoAction funding. **Your project must include at least one (1) environmental indicator AND one (1) capacity building indicator.**

Please Note: Should your project receive funding, it is expected that all indicators and measurements of indicators identified in your application will be included in the Contribution Agreement as expected achievements of your project. Should variances be identified in the negotiation, funding may be reduced. It is expected that you will be able to report on all estimated indicators at the conclusion of EcoAction funding.

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS		
Performance Indicator	Description	Unit Measure (for total project duration)
Reduction or diversion of kilograms of toxic or harmful waste	Measured by weight (kilograms) of material sent to hazardous waste collection, items not used, items properly disposed of.	# of kilograms
Amount of water conserved	Measured as number of litres of water conserved.	# of litres
Area of shoreline protected, stabilized or improved	Converting linear kilometres to area (in hectares) by capturing the depth of work and not just the shoreline.	# of hectares
Percentage of recommendations from environmental management plans implemented	Only implemented recommendations from national, regional, or community environmental management plans will be captured. Plans that are developed as part of your proposed project activities should not be captured in this indicator.	% of recommendations
Area of habitat protected	Protected: to maintain the status or integrity of habitat (e.g., land secured through stewardship agreements). Protection noted if done within the timeframe of the project or if firm commitments provided.	# of hectares
Area of habitat in which management or restoration actions have been implemented through project activities	Includes improvement or restoration actions. Examples of types of actions taken: debris removal, vegetation plantings, erosion control. May include aquatic/terrestrial habitat. Converting linear kilometres to area.	# of hectares
Amount of indigenous plants, trees and shrubs planted	Projects will have built-in conditions to help ensure survival of plantings.	# of plants/trees/shrubs
Percentage of indigenous plants, trees and shrubs planted that survived	Number of total plantings / Number of plants surviving over at least one winter.	% of plants/trees/shrubs
Amount of installed structures used by wildlife	Total number of structures installed	# of structures

ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS		
Performance Indicator	**Description**	**Unit Measure (for total project duration)**
Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)	Includes: Carbon Dioxide (CO_2); Methane (CH_4); Nitrous Oxide (N_2O); HGCs, PFCs and SF_6.	# of tonnes (C02 eq.)

CAPACITY BUILDING INDICATORS		
Performance Indicator	**Description**	**Unit Measure (for total project duration)**
Jobs created	Paid employment generated directly by funded projects. Jobs created include full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract employment generated by the project.	# of jobs created
Volunteers participating directly in project	Volunteers, **including youth**, are individuals with a role in implementing the project.	# of volunteers
Youth volunteers participating directly in project	**Youth volunteers only** are individuals with a role in implementing the project.	# of youth volunteers
Participants in activity(ies)	Total number of individuals, **including youth**, directly participating in a project activity (e.g., attendants to an information session, an outreach activity, etc.). They are engaged through project's activities, but as opposed to volunteering, they do not necessarily have a specific role in implementing the project.	# of participants
Youth participants in activity(ies)	Total **number of youth only**, directly participating in a project activity (e.g., attendants to an information session, an outreach activity, etc). They are engaged through project's activities, but as opposed to volunteers, they do not necessarily have a specific role in implementing the project.	# of youth participants

CAPACITY BUILDING INDICATORS		
Performance Indicator	**Description**	**Unit Measure (for total project duration)**
Youth participants in environmental clean-up activity(ies)	Total **number of youth only**, directly participating in environmental clean-up activities.	# of youth participants
People reached as a result of project communication activities	Total number of people reached as a result of project communication activities, including conventional and social media, outreach events, ads, mailing distribution, newsletter, public events, new releases, publications, website visits, etc.	# of people
People reached who indicated they would modify their behaviour as a result of project activities	Assessed via pre- and post-project surveys as part of project.	# of people

Other Project Indicators

List any additional indicators which will/could result from your project activities (approximately 500 words).

Project Environmental Sustainability

Explain how benefits to the environment and your community will be maintained after the project is completed. Applicants are encouraged to include a knowledge transfer strategy, where appropriate, to encourage sustainable behaviour changes for the protection of fresh water in Canada (approximately 500 words).

COVID-19 Considerations

Explain how community engagement activities will be delivered to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Secondary Project Contact

Contact must be knowledgeable on the content of the application. Contact should be different than the one listed under Module 1 - Tombstone Data.

Other Information

Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge Transfer is a process of sharing information, experience or knowledge, during an EcoAction funded project, which encourages sustainable behaviour changes for the protection of fresh water in Canada.

There are many formal and informal methods that may be used for knowledge creation and knowledge transfer. Please explain the way in which knowledge will be created and shared in your project.

Some methods used for knowledge creation could include: Traditional Indigenous Knowledge, surveys, community-level discussions and project data collection, among others.

Knowledge may be transferred or shared with impacted groups. Some examples may include: storytelling, educational workshops, project reports and social media posts, among others.

Materials produced in other languages

Some projects may work with populations who speak a language other than French or English. Translation costs are eligible expenditures for EcoAction projects and may be included within your project budget.

Persons with disabilities

Disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments (including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment), activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. For more information please refer to the Federal Disability Reference Guide and the Summary of the Accessible Canada Act.

If applicable to your project, please confirm if persons with disabilities will be able to contribute, participate and be involved in project activities.

PROJECT BUDGET

You must clearly state the total amount of ECCC funding that is being requested for your project. The maximum contribution per project for EcoAction is $100,000 and the minimum is

$25,000. Requests for EcoAction funding that exceed $100,000 or are less than $25,000 will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding.

The maximum duration of EcoAction funding contribution to a project is 36 consecutive months. Applications for EcoAction contributions in excess of 36 months will not be considered.

We anticipate that EcoAction funding will not start before summer 2023; however the project may start earlier than this time using other contributors' funding. **Please note:** Any and all project funding used prior to the start or after the completion date of EcoAction funding cannot be considered as part of the matching funding contribution.

At least 50% of the total value of your project must come from sources other than the Government of Canada. Some exceptions apply; please see Funding Requirements section on Page 4.

For additional guidance on how to complete the budget in GCEMS, please refer to Annex D.

Contributor

Present all sources of funding for the project, including funds requested from ECCC in this application. Include the contributor's name, the contributor's type and the funding amount (for both cash and in-kind) per fiscal year.

EcoAction projects are normally non-revenue generating; however, incidental production of revenue can be permitted provided that it is used to offset project costs.

Expenditures

Present your project expenditures for each fiscal year. You have the ability to describe the detailed expense in the "Expenditure Description" section. The "Expenditure Description" section should be used to include the following (but not limited to) details:
- an itemized expenditure description can include the number of unit(s), unit cost and total cost;

  - Example 1:
    Expenditure Type: Materials and Supplies
    Expenditure Description: Trees $X/unit, XX units in total

- Example 2:

  Expenditure Type: Salaries & Wages

  Expenditure Description: Project Coordinator $XX/hour for XX hours, Technician $XX/hour for XX hours, Biologist $XX/hour for XX hours

- an estimate of all expenses and in-kind donations at fair market value (using the standard rate for a product or service in your area);
- a calculation of all volunteer time at fair market value as in-kind contribution;
- costs of employer contributions made on behalf of employees, such as benefits and Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs);
- costs associated with Official Languages activities and/or products; and
- costs associated with obtaining permits.

Eligible expenditures include any GST/HST that is not reimbursable by the Canada Revenue Agency and any PST not reimbursable by the provinces.

Expenditure Type	Expenditure Description
Communications and printing, production and distribution costs	Includes production and distribution of brochures, conventional and social media, outreach events, ads, mailing distribution, newsletters, public events, new releases, publications, as well as translation costs.
Contractors	Costs to hire contractors to undertake project activities, such as general labourers or researchers.
Equipment rentals	Includes rental fees and insurance, if applicable.
Management and professional services	Costs such as accounting/monitoring, translation, and liability insurance.
Material & supplies costs	Includes personal safety equipment, tools (less than $10,000).
Overhead	A reasonable share of overhead and/or administrative costs. These costs must be directly attributable to the project. This includes rent, bookkeeping, telephone, internet, etc.
Purchase of capital assets	A capital asset is defined as a single item costing more than $10,000 with a useful life of more than one year.

Expenditure Type	Expenditure Description
Salaries and wages	Salaries and wages of employees, including benefits and Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs). The value of volunteer time can be included in salaries and wages, as in-kind.
Travel	Includes mileage, meals and accommodation; mileage/kilometer rates must be consistent with the [Government of Canada](#) rates or lower.
Vehicle rental and operation costs	Includes vehicle rental and insurance fees, fuel, etc.
Other expenditures	Please be sure to clearly indicate in the description what the expenditure is.

OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Other Relevant Information

The following information is **highly recommended,** but is not required at time of application:

- any additional information that will enhance a proposal (e.g., research, photos, sketches, maps);
- letters of commitment confirming cash or in-kind support from project contributors including amounts;
    - Should your project be selected for funding, letters confirming cash and in-kind support including amounts will be required before an agreement can be signed.
- letter of support from the First Nation for projects engaging, or involving Indigenous communities;
- landowner support letter(s) where restoration activities will occur on private property, confirming that the group has permission to undertake activities on the property; and
- community organization support letter(s) endorsing the project.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Under the *Official Languages Act of Canada (OLA)*, the Government of Canada is committed to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada, and fostering full recognition and use of both languages in Canadian Society. Under the *OLA*, the two official languages in Canada are English and French. In accordance with the OLA, you may

need to offer services to the public in both official languages, depending on the project location and/or the target audience.

To determine if your project will be delivered in a geographic area with an official language minority community, contact your ECCC regional office or consult the Official Languages Minority Communities map available through GCEMS. The EcoAction Community Funding Program funds eligible translation costs associated with this requirement, as long as they are included in your project's budget. For more information on the requirements under the OLA, please contact your ECCC regional office.

CERTIFICATION

Ensure that the Certification/Electronic Signature module is completed by an authorized individual of your organization.

Annex C – Additional Guidance on Ineligible Project Activities

Activities required by law and/or mandated by other levels of government

EcoAction cannot fund activities required by law and/or mandated by other levels of government (i.e., municipal and provincial), including, but not limited to:

- **Formal curriculum materials**, defined as planned program objectives, content, learning experiences, resources and assessment offered by provincially/territorially funded schools. Educational programs and resources produced independently of the Ministry of Education and not required to be used by teachers or in schools are considered non-formal, and may be eligible for funding.

- **Core/required operational costs belonging to a program mandated by law**, for example, municipal water treatment activities.

- **Installation** and/or **verification of compliance of septic tanks** with regulations or bylaws on properties, if municipal regulations require owners to install such systems.

- **Activities required by provincial regulation related to agricultural practices**, such as the construction of cattle exclusion fencing around riparian areas, when such fencing is required by legislation.

- **Clean-up activities** mandated by law, such as cleaning shoreline debris resulting from overboard shipping containers, or **remediation** and/or **restoration of contaminated sites** (e.g., spills) when mandated by law or otherwise, as the landowner or group responsible for the contamination are usually legally responsible for their own material/recovery operations and remediation.

Examples provided above are for demonstrative purposes only. Applicants are responsible for conducting the necessary research to determine if law mandates any of the activities listed in their application, and clarifying in their application how they differ (if applicable). It is strongly recommended that applicants verify the federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal legislation and regulations relating to the project's activities and/or location(s). In all cases, projects must meet all other eligibility criteria and clearly show how their goals, objectives, and activities fully align with EcoAction's priority result.

Note: Projects that include activities mandated by law *may* be considered eligible if non-EcoAction funds are identified for those activities. Projects that include activities that may be

required or mandated by other levels of government are to be assessed by the program on a case-by-case basis to determine eligibility.

Projects already under way, the duplication/continuation of projects, and ongoing core organizational activities

EcoAction can only fund new projects and/or new phases of a project. The continuation of existing projects, whether funded by EcoAction or not, are not eligible for funding.

In order for a new phase of a project to be eligible, applicants must demonstrate how the proposed project is distinct from previous projects/phases. The proposed new phase must:

- have distinct beginning and end dates;
- have distinct goals and objectives that clearly differentiate the phases as different projects; and
- track the performance indicators specifically from the new phases' activities.

Attributes that can help determine a new phase of a project, rather than continuation or duplication, include:

- the same activities in a **different geographic location** than previous projects (EcoAction or otherwise);
- **new activities** in the same geographic location as previous projects;
- an **expanded scope of activities** in the same or different geographic location; and/or
- **new/expanded** performance indicators.

Applicants are responsible for clearly demonstrating how the proposed project is a new phase and/or differs from ongoing core organizational activities. Failure to effectively demonstrate your project is novel or a new phase may result in your application being deemed ineligible.

Lobbying or advocacy

Lobbying or advocacy is an ineligible activity, and is defined by the Program as communicating with public office holders **for payment**, with regard to:

- the making, developing or amending of federal legislative proposals, bills or resolutions, regulations, policies or programs;

- the awarding of federal grants, contributions or other financial benefits; and/or
- the awarding of a federal government contract (for consultant lobbyists only).

Note: Applicants undertaking research as part of their project activities with the intention to share final research products with public office holders may not constitute lobbying or advocacy, and may be considered eligible.
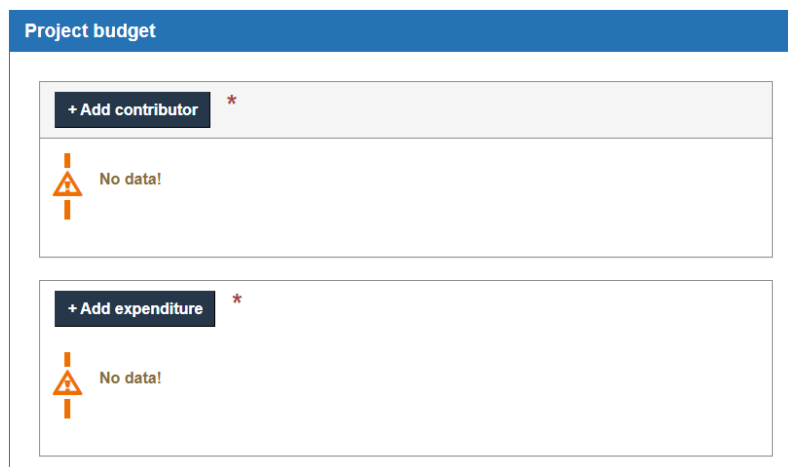
Annex D - Completing the Budget Section in GCEMs

This annex provides additional guidance on how to complete the Budget section for your EcoAction Community Funding Program (EcoAction) application in the Grants and Contributions Enterprise Management System (GCEMS). **Please note: It is strongly recommended to complete the budget in GCEMS 24 hours prior to the deadline; applications unable to be submitted by the deadline due to budget errors may not be considered.**

If you experience any difficulty reconciling the contributor and expenditure summaries, please contact the GCEMS Support Team by email at sgesc-gcems-sgesc-gcems@ec.gc.ca, and include your four-digit application ID number.

Budget Section

This section consists of two subsections that each populate separate contribution summaries: the Contributor Summary and the Expenditure Summary.

Figure 1. The Project Budget section in GCEMs and the Contributor and Expenditure subsection where applicants can input data.

A. Contributor Summary

The Contributor Summary categorizes the project funding by Contributor. In this section, applicants must identify project contributors by clicking "+Add contributor". The system will prompt you to select the type of contributor, whether the contributor/contribution amount is confirmed, and the type of contribution (i.e., cash or in-kind). Applicants must also specify each contributor's contribution by fiscal year.

Note 1: Please only select the "ECCC" category for funding requested from EcoAction. For all other government funding (i.e., Department of Fisheries and Oceans), including from ECCC (i.e., Canadian Wildlife Services), please select "Other Federal Funding" and specify the department in the space provided.

Note 2: If a project contributor is identified as confirmed, a Letter of Support should be submitted with the application in the "Other supporting information" section. If a funding contributor is not confirmed, a Letter of Support will be required before a contribution agreement can be signed.

Note 3: EcoAction requires that applicants have 1:1 matched funding from non-federal sources. Matched funding is based on the total amounts contributed (i.e., there are no matched funding requirements for individual fiscal years). EcoAction does not provide in-kind contributions.

Note 4: When inputting project contributor amounts, only use digits and do not include symbols (i.e., "$" will cause an error).

Note 5: Pressing save will ensure the current data is added to the application and can be viewed in the Contributor Summary near the end of the budget section.

Note 6: As you add contributors, you will see a series of errors. These do not affect your ability to continue completing the budget. See Section C for guidance.

Error list

- Error Year 1 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project Cash. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 1 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project in-kind. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 2 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project Cash. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 2 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project in-kind. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 3 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project Cash. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 3 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project in-kind. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.

Figure 2. Error list that will be generated when the contribution and expenditure amounts are not balancing.

Example A:

Figure 3. Addition of a contributor and the funding amounts broken down by fiscal year.

In this example, the applicant is requesting a total of $75,000 from EcoAction funding:

- The Contributor name should reflect the contributing organization's name.
- The Contributor type is Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC).
  - Only EcoAction funding should be categorized as ECCC.
- The selected Confirmed field is "No" as EcoAction is not confirmed at the time of this application.
- The amount requested per fiscal year is inputted in the corresponding box under the correct column.
  - In-kind will be $0 as EcoAction does not provide in-kind support.
- The total will be the calculated sum of each fiscal year amount, respective of contribution type (cash and/or in-kind) and will populate when you click the "Calculate Totals" button.

Example B:

Figure 4. Addition of a Federal Government contributor, other than ECCC, and the funding amounts broken down by fiscal year.

In this example, the applicant is adding $50,000 and $15,000 of confirmed cash and in-kind support, respectively, from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO):

- The Contributor name should reflect the contributing organization's name.
- The Contributor type is Other Government Funding.
  - Only EcoAction funding should be categorized as ECCC.
- The selected Confirmed field is "Yes" as the applicant has confirmed support from DFO.
  - The applicant will attach the Letter of Support they have received from DFO to the "Other supporting information" section at the bottom of the application.
- The amount requested per fiscal year is inputted in the corresponding box under the correct column.
- The total will be the calculated sum of each fiscal year amount, respective of contribution type (cash and/or in-kind) and will populate when you click the "Calculate Totals" button.

<u>Example C</u>:

Add contributor

Contributor name *	ABC Contributor	
Contributor type	Other	
Confirmed yes/no	No	
	Cash	**In-kind**
Year 1 - April 2022 - March 2023	0	10000
Year 2 - April 2023 - March 2024	0	20000
Year 3 - April 2024 - March 2025	0	10000
Year 4 - April 2025 - March 2026	0	0
Project total	**0**	**40000**

Cancel   Clear   Calculate Totals   Save

Figure 5. Addition of a contributor and the funding amounts broken down by fiscal year.

In this example, the applicant is expecting to receive $40,000 of in-kind support from a non-profit, non-government project partner:

- The Contributor name should reflect the contributing organization's name.
- The Contributor type is Other.
- The selected Confirmed field is "No" as the applicant has discussed this contribution with the project partner but does not have official confirmation/Letter of Support.
    - If the project is approved, and the funding is required to meet the 1:1 matched funding requirement, a Letter of Support will need to submitted before a contribution agreement can be signed.
- The amount requested per fiscal year is inputted in the corresponding box under the correct column.
- The total will be the calculated sum of each fiscal year amount, respective of contribution type (cash and/or in-kind) and will populate when you click the "Calculate Totals" button.

B. Expenditure Summary

The Expenditure Summary demonstrates how funds will be expended by cost category/types. ECCC's funding may be used to cover specific types of expenditures (refer to Eligible Expenditures section in this Applicant's Guide). Expenditures not eligible to be funded by EcoAction require the use of funds from other project contributors (cash or in-kind). Applicants are responsible for consulting this Applicant's Guide to determine the eligibility of their project and expenditures.

An expenditure can be funded from multiple sources in both cash and in-kind, which will be reflected in the expenditure subsection by completing three different columns for each fiscal year, for each added expenditures: ECCC funding – cash (i.e., requested EcoAction funding), and Other project expenditures – cash and in-kind (i.e., all other contributor funding). Both of the Total projects expenditures columns (cash and in-kind) will be calculated to generate the totals in the bottom row using the "Calculate Totals" button.

Note 1: If an expenditure is recurring throughout the project, the amount of funding required for each year must be specified. Please use the description box to detail each expense to enable review and justification of project expenses, including basic rates or amounts to demonstrate how the total was calculated (e.g., Heavy Machinery $200/hr, 12 hours total).

Note 2: EcoAction funding should be the only funding included in "ECCC". EcoAction does not provide in-kind funding, and as such, the ECCC funding in-kind section should remain blank.

Note 3: As you add expenditures, you will see a series of errors. These do not affect your ability to continue completing the budget. See Section C for guidance.

Error list

- Error Year 1 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project Cash. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 1 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project in-kind. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 2 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project Cash. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 2 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project in-kind. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 3 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project Cash. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.
- Error Year 3 – Please adjust either contributors or expenditures in column Other project in-kind. Contributor value must be equal to expenditures.

Figure 6. Error list that will be generated when the contribution and expenditure amounts are not balancing.

Example D:

Add Expenditure

Expenditure type	Equipment rentals					
Expenditure description *	Heavy Machinery Rental ($200/hr)					
	ECCC funding		Other project expenditures		Total project expenditures	
	Cash	In-kind	Cash	In-kind	Cash	In-kind
April 2023 - March 2024	5000	0	10000	2500	15000	2500
April 2024 - March 2025	20000	0	20000	6500	40000	6500
April 2025 - March 2026	10000	0	10000	1000	20000	1000
April 2026 - March 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand total project	**35000**	**0**	**40000**	**10000**	**75000**	**10000**

Cancel   Clear   Calculate Totals   Save

Figure 7. Addition of an expenditure and a breakdown of how it will be funded by fiscal year and contributor source.

In this example, the applicant is demonstrating the fiscal year costs and contributor breakdown for equipment rentals:

- The Expenditure type is selected from the drop-down menu.
  - Please see Expenditure section in this Applicant's Guide for details on which type is best suited.
- The Expenditure description reflects the activities, goods and/or services the funds will be used towards, and includes basic rates/calculations.
- Each fiscal year amount is inputted in the correct column to reflect the appropriate contributor type:
  - $35,000 of requested EcoAction funding under "ECCC – cash".
    - "ECCC - in-kind" is $0 as EcoAction does not provide In-Kind support.
  - $40,000 cash and $10,000 in-kind support of contributor contributions under "Other project expenditures".
    - These amounts may be from multiple contributors.
- The Total project expenditures columns will calculate sums based on inputted amounts when you click the "Calculate Totals" button.

Reconciling the Contributor Summary and Expenditures Summary

The Contributor Summary correlates with the information in the Expenditure Summary. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all amounts in the Contributor Summary (both cash and in-kind) are accurately reflected in the Expenditures Summary.

The following two pages demonstrate the relationship between sums provided by the applicant in each section.

Please note: Failure to reconcile the amounts will result in an error preventing you to submit your application. It is recommended to complete and reconcile the budget section 24 hours prior to the deadline; applications unable to be submitted by the deadline due to budget errors may not be considered.

Expenditure summary

Expenditure type / Expenditure description	ECCC funding Cash	ECCC funding In-kind	Other project expenditures Cash	Other project expenditures In-kind	Total project expenditures Cash	Total project expenditures In-kind
Salaries and Wages Summer Student Staff	10000	0	0	0	10000	0
Management and professional service expenditures Fish habitat specialist	0	0	0	10000	0	10000
Equipment rentals Heavy Machinery Rental	5000	0	0	0	5000	0
Equipment rentals Lab tests for water samples	0	0	0	5000	0	5000
Management and professional service expenditures Project Manager	0	0	10000	0	10000	0
Total April 2023 - March 2024	**$15,000**	**$0**	**$10,000**	**$15,000**	**$25,000**	**$15,000**
Salaries and Wages Summer Student Staff	20000	0	0	0	20000	0
Management and professional service expenditures Fish habitat specialist	0	0	0	20000	0	20000
Equipment rentals Heavy Machinery Rental	3000	0	0	0	3000	0
Equipment rentals Lab tests for water samples	0	0	0	5000	0	5000
Management and professional service expenditures Project Manager	0	0	30000	0	30000	0
Material and supplies expenditures Native Vegetation	22000	0	0	0	22000	0
Total April 2024 - March 2025	**$45,000**	**$0**	**$30,000**	**$25,000**	**$75,000**	**$25,000**
Salaries and Wages Summer Student Staff	10000	0	0	0	10000	0
Management and professional service expenditures Fish habitat specialist	0	0	0	10000	0	10000
Equipment rentals Heavy Machinery Rental	5000	0	0	0	5000	0
Equipment rentals Lab tests for water samples	0	0	0	5000	0	5000
Management and professional service expenditures Project Manager	0	0	10000	0	10000	0
Total April 2025 - March 2026	**$15,000**	**$0**	**$10,000**	**$15,000**	**$25,000**	**$15,000**
Expenditure total	**$75,000**	**$0**	**$50,000**	**$55,000**	**$125,000**	**$55,000**

Figure 8. Summary of project expenditures and contributors broken down by type and fiscal year.

Legend

Colour	Contributor Summary	Expenditure Summary – Expenditure Total (bottom row)	Notes
	Total Project Funding - ECCC (contributor row) - Cash	ECCC Funding – Cash	Please include only EcoAction requested funding.
	Total Project Funding - ECCC (contributor row) – In-Kind	ECCC Funding – In-Kind	As EcoAction does not provide In-Kind support; this sum will **always** be $0.
	Total Project Funding – Contributor Rows – Cash (one row per contributor)	Other Project Expenditures – Cash	The sum of all cash contributions from all other project contributors, including other ECCC funding (not including EcoAction), should equal the Other Project Expenditures – Cash – Expenditure Total.
	Total Project Funding - Contributor(s) – In-Kind (one row per contributor)	Other Project Expenditures – In-Kind	The sum of all In-Kind contributions from all other project contributors, including other ECCC funding (not including EcoAction), should equal the Other Project Expenditures – In-Kind – Expenditure Total.

	Total Project Funding - Cash – Total (bottom row)	Total Project Expenditures – Cash	The sum of <u>all</u> cash contributions from all project contributors, including other ECCC funding and EcoAction.
	Total Project Funding – In-Kind – Total (bottom row)	Total Project Expenditures – In-Kind	The sum of <u>all</u> In-Kind contributions from all other project contributors, including other ECCC funding and EcoAction.