**Environmental Damages Fund – Expression of Interest (EOI)**

The Environmental Damages Fund (EDF) is a Government of Canada program administered by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). EDF is a national program that uses court-awarded fines for projects with positive environmental impacts and in the manner intended by the court. EDF follows the ‘Polluter Pays Principle’, which ensures that those who cause damage to the environment take responsibility for their actions. Funds are allocated to Canadian projects that relate as closely as possible to the original incident in terms of type of resources damaged and geographic location.

**Applicant’s name**: WWF-Canada

(Applicant signs a funding agreement with ECCC if the project is approved and must be a legal entity)

**Project title:** Addressing the data gap in Northern cod fishery removals

**Applicable use restrictions (as stated on EDF website):** For projects aimed at promoting the proper management and control of fisheries and fish habitat, or the conservation and protection of fish or fish habitat, in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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| **Applicant information**  **Address:** 40 Quidi Vidi Road **City:** St. John’s **Province/Territory:** NL **Postal Code:** A1A 1C1  **Website (if applicable):** wwf.ca |

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| **Project contact:**  Name: Janice Ryan  Title: Senior Specialist, Fisheries Conservation  Phone (work): (709) 722-9453  Phone (mobile): (709) 725-9337  Email: jryan@wwfcanada.org | **Project contact:**  Name: Sigrid Kuehnemund  Title: VP Oceans Program  Phone (work): (709) 722-9453  Phone (mobile): (709) 746-8088  Email: skuehnemund@wwfcanada.org |

**Organization type (Select one: non-governmental organization, university or academic institution, Indigenous group, provincial government, municipal government, territorial government): Non-Governmental organization**

**Project type (Select one: restoration, environmental quality improvement, research and development, education and awareness): Education and Awareness**

**Project start date (day/month/year): 01/04/2019**

**Project end date (day/month/year): 31/03/2021**

**Geographic location of project activities:** Communities adjacent to the Northern cod (2J3KL cod) stock.

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| **Funding summary emphatic yes**  Total funding requested from EDF:$65,200  Total cash funding from other sources (including revenues): Click here to enter text  Total in-kind contribution from other sources: $10,000 (DFO)  Total project value: $75,200 |

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| **Provide a summary explaining how the pro**j**ect directly relates to the use restrictions** (Approximately 200 words):  In the absence of regulations that permit accountability in the 2JKL cod recreational fishery, removals from all sources are not accounted for. Lack of total removals impedes scientists from considering and integrating the total sources of removals in the cod assessment model. This in turn, impedes the ability to accurately calculate the total fishing mortality, undermining the ability to clearly calculate the stock productivity most importantly, the ability to make projections for the future stock growth, thus leading to many questions when attempting to determine robust harvest control rules – a key component in the Northern cod Recovery Strategy.  The 2J3KL cod stock has been under a moratorium for commercial fishing since 1992, and despite a small sign of recovery between 2012-2016, the stock remains well below the biologically based limit reference point at 37% of Blim. To make sound management decisions that enable stock regrowth, and to provide the best science information for the recovery strategy process (ongoing) it is critical that all removals from this stock are accounted for.  Since 2005 there has been an Inshore Stewardship fishery for the 2J3KL cod stock whereby the fishing effort is kept at a low level to ensure fishing mortality does not impede stock recovery. Removals from the stewardship fishery are reported and there is a good management system in place to protect the stock. An additional source of removals from the 2J3KL cod stock is through a recreational cod fishery, which has been ongoing since 2006, with no reporting mechanism or ability to monitor the removals for this fishery. As per the 2018 annual stock assessment science maintains, “until a reliable method of estimating recreational catch is determined, total catch for northern cod and adjacent coastal cod stocks remains uncertain” (DFO, 2018).  To improve those estimates and improve scientific assessments and promote the proper management and control of fisheries, Fish Harvesters feel that recreational landings should be subject to the same rules and regulations that apply to commercial landings.”  Despite two rounds of public consultation and a promise from the Fisheries Minister to implement a tags and license system to monitor the removals of 2J3KL cod, there has been no movement to date. Our project proposal aims to influence positive change. |

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| **Briefly describe the project’s main goals, activities, methodology and results** (Approximately 300 words):  WWF proposes to implement a citizen science approach based on social-science methodology to address this gap in data regarding the level of removals in the 2J3KL cod recreational fishery. We propose to do so through the development and implementation of a research methodology to improve understanding of the level of removals of Atlantic cod Newfoundland and Labrador population in the recreational cod fishery.  Our proposed methodology is as follows:   1. Commission a social scientist to develop and implement research methodology (i.e., focus groups and telephone survey) to gather information and data on the participation level and relevant habits of people for the 2J3KL cod recreational fishery. The focus groups will allow us to identify barriers to reporting cod removals and related issues and concerns that the public may have sharing information on their recreational cod fishery experience. We can use this information to develop an effective province-wide survey. 2. Focus Groups – 1. Identification of participants for the focus groups – working with the FFAW and Indigenous groups - ten locations for roundtable discussions with focus groups shall be determined, with an average of 10 participants per focus group. 2. Follow-through with the implementation of the focus groups. 3. Implementation of telephone survey – based on the information collected in the focus groups a telephone survey shall be implemented by the Fisheries Science, Stewardship and Sustainability Board. 4. Sharing of Local Fisheries Knowledge with participants in the fisheries science and management process:      1. Feedback and Final Report   Team members and their roles:   * WWF Senior Specialist– oversee contracts; ensure the activity is on track, manages the contracts; oversee the staff, ensure activity is meeting the FIP action plan goals * WWF Fisheries Specialist: liaise with stakeholders, facilitate focus groups, prepare meeting materials, focus group logistics, catering, invite/RRSPs, general running of the meetings Wi-Fi/technical assistance, focus group rapporteur * Indigenous Liaison in NunatuKavut and Nunatsiavut to assist in implementing the research methodology within the Indigenous communities. * Social Scientist (Contract): develop research methodologies; analyze data; prepare reports; present final report and recommendations. * Fisheries and Oceans Canada – collaborate on methodology and approach.   **Outcomes**   * Increase the engagement and participation level of the public in addressing the information and data gaps in the 2J3KL cod recreational fishery. * Increase the public’s understanding of why reporting on the removals in the recreational cod fishery are important to completing robust population and stock assessments, and the purpose of these assessments. * Lay the foundation for a citizen science-based data collection program focused on the removals of cod in the recreational cod fishery. * Provide a feedback mechanism for all public/stakeholders so they may suggest methods to address the need to improve the monitoring and reporting of recreational cod catches to catalyze a collaborative approach to meeting this need. |

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| **Please provide your estimated target values for all EDF performance indicators on which your project will deliver (Please reference EDF’s Applicant Guide pages 10-12 for list of performance indicators. *Please select at least one*).**  **Performance Indicators:**   1. Report on the research methodology, including: ethics procedure; questions and interview topics; description of focus group structure 2. Report on the successful identification of participants, including rationale for why they were chosen and their geographic location within Newfoundland and Labrador 3. 10 focus groups throughout NL with minimum of 10 participants in each group. 4. Results from the telephone survey complied and delivered in a database 5. Report on the successful identification of a mechanism for sharing the collected LFK with participants in the fisheries science and management processes. 6. Copy of the final report and power point presentation to WWF-Canada at least one week prior to sharing with participants in the fisheries and science management processes 7. Final report outlining the success of the project and its reception by participants in the fisheries science and management processes, identify lessons learned, issues raised, and potential next steps or areas for future work; include information collected in 1-5 above as appendices |

**When completed, please submit to your respective EDF Regional Office.**