



SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL DATA AND SCIENCE SYSTEM (SEDSS): AN INTEGRATED AND OPEN DATA PLATFORM



Photo: Dave Lastovskiy

Federal leadership is urgently needed to move Canada towards a more integrated and complete data and science system in order to address Canada's growing environmental challenges, support the transition to a clean and low-carbon economy, and more specifically to support implementation of proposed legislative reforms to federal environmental and regulatory processes.

The Green Budget Coalition recommends Budget 2018 invest in the following two strategic measures.

Such investments will support key national policy priorities, including: environmental assessment and regulatory process reforms, the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth & Climate Change; Canada's biodiversity and protected areas targets; sustainable and climate resilient agriculture; sustainable fisheries; freshwater protection; and reduction of environmental risks from toxic chemicals.

1. Expert Panel on Sharing Environmental Data and Science

Investment Required: 2018/2019: \$5 million

The GBC strongly recommends establishing a shared environmental data and science (SEDSS) system - an integrated platform that would facilitate the collection, exchange and use of environmental data and information across Canada. Similar to the European Union "Shared Environmental Information System" (SEIS), this web-enabled data network would help improve the quality, availability and accessibility of environmental information thereby enabling

evidence-based decision making and improving policy development, project planning, assessments and cumulative effects management.

Given the complexities and potential benefits of developing and implementing an SEDSS-type initiative, the GBC recommends an initial \$5 million investment to establish and support an Expert Panel with a mandate to:

- Identify existing barriers to environmental data collection, exchange and use across various data collectors and users, jurisdictions and sectors;
- Study examples of existing information sharing systems in Canada and abroad (e.g., SEIS);
- Identify and evaluate the regulatory, policy, technical, infrastructure and resource (i.e. costs); requirements for developing, implementing and managing an integrated information sharing system;
- Evaluate various governance and institutional structures needed for implementing and managing the system; and
- Publish a report with recommendations to government on actions and requirements that would help close Canada's environmental information gap.

2. National Ecosystem Mapping & Monitoring Tool

Investment Required: For 2018/19: \$30 million, plus \$120 million over 4 years starting in 2019/2020

Ongoing from 2023: \$25 million per year

This information tool would generate critical data needed for soil, air and biodiversity monitoring, environmental assessments, cumulative effects management, and climate change risk mitigation. Building on the National Ecosystem Early Warning System (NEEWS) proposed in 2016 by Natural Resources Canada and the department's current efforts to develop an integrated geospatial data platform, this comprehensive mapping and monitoring tool would allow decision-makers to better manage the risks and impacts of land-use change on Canadian landscapes.

For more details on this GBC recommendation, please see www.greenbudget.ca/2018sedss.

James Brennan
Director of Government Affairs
Ducks Unlimited Canada
j_brennan@ducks.ca



Photo: Warren Wong