

Freshwater management (Target 11)

The sustainable management and stewardship of Canada's freshwater environments is one of the great challenges of our time, and one of the most important means by which Canada can demonstrate global natural resource leadership.

Recent investments in freshwater and the establishment of the Canada Water Agency, while encouraging, should be seen as a first step towards a coordinated national approach to protecting all of Canada's freshwater resources, which are central to our nation's health and prosperity. Especially to meet commitments made under the Freshwater Challenge and KMGBF, ongoing investments in freshwater are needed to protect and restore our large lakes and river systems, and the surrounding watersheds and wetlands that support them.

Total Recommended Investment:

**\$675 million over five years, and then
\$200 million over the following five years
(2030–2035)**

- **\$475 million over five years** to expand freshwater management practices nationally:
 - **\$280 million** in additional funding for the Freshwater Action Plan to improve water quality, manage water quantity, and protect aquatic biodiversity through implementing watershed action plans and in-water actions nationally, starting with:
 - Fraser River
 - Mackenzie River

Investments should be prioritized through a risk-based analysis using science and research and in collaboration with Indigenous peoples. [ECCC]

- **\$195 million** to address the funding gap in the rest of the country, to cover regions outside of the waterbodies identified as nationally significant, for

projects that address issues including climate mitigation, climate adaptation, truth and reconciliation through capacity building and partnerships with Indigenous peoples, habitat restoration, water technology and innovation, community-based water monitoring, fish population recovery, planning, and natural infrastructure. [ECCC]

- Ottawa River
- Columbia Basin

- **\$400 million over ten years** to build on the BC Watershed Security Fund to address water quantity and quality challenges and improve freshwater environments for Pacific salmon and steelhead in the Fraser River Basin and other priority watersheds (coordinate this funding with the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative). [ECCC]

Many of Canada's vast freshwater resources are located on Indigenous lands, whose people have stewarded these resources since time immemorial. Their inherent rights, traditional knowledge and understanding of these ecosystems must be a core component of any plans or actions taken. Additional funding for freshwater ecosystems should directly support both Indigenous-led water stewardship efforts and progress towards the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in Canada.

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