

Environmental Studies Research Fund

OIL SPILL FORUM

JANUARY 2021

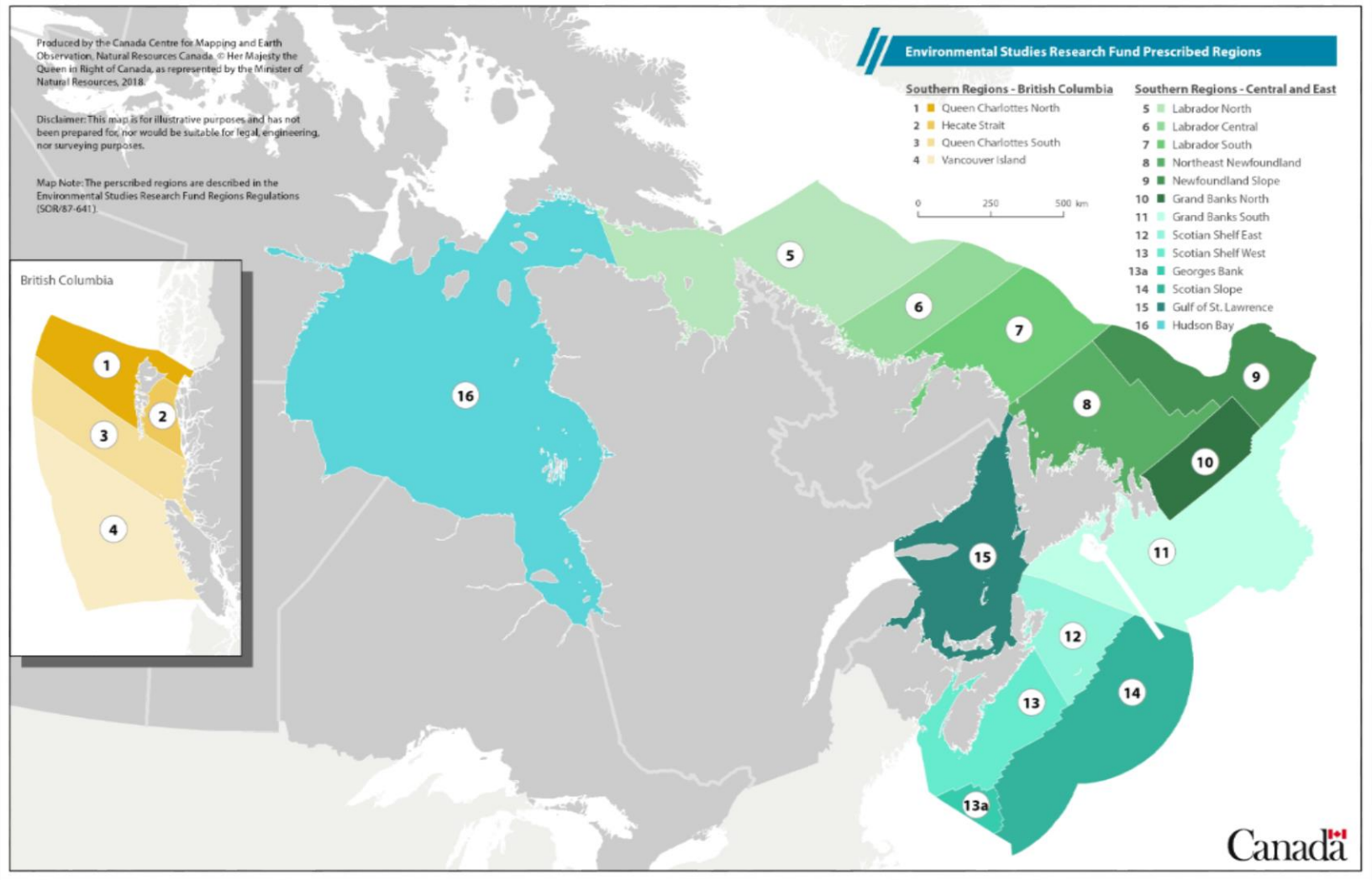


Origin & Mandate

The Environmental Studies Research Fund (ESRF) was established in 1983 to finance environmental and social research related to oil and gas development in Canada's frontier lands. Its intent is to conduct studies which benefit both industry and government and which support the regulatory decisions-making process.

As stated under the *Canada Petroleum Resources Act* (Part 7), the purpose of the Fund is to finance environmental and social studies pertaining to the manner in which, and the terms and conditions under which, exploration, development and production activities on frontier lands should be conducted.

ESRF Prescribed Regions in Atlantic Canada



How it Operate

The Fund is directed by a 12 members Management Board comprised of representatives from industry, federal public service, offshore petroleum boards, and the public. This Board is responsible to set the Fund's research priority areas and to select the studies to be funded.

The Fund is supported by a Secretariat located within Natural Resources Canada.

All ESRF funding is provided through levies on frontier lands paid by lease-holding oil and gas companies. Levies are fees per hectare of land under lease. The ESRF yearly budget is based on the studies to be funded and does not constitute a fix amount per year as for other government funding programs.

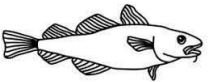
ESRF Research Priority Areas for 2020-2025 Cycle

Research Area	Research needs / Questions to answer
Seabirds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil spill preparedness and response for impacts to seabirds • Decline of Leach's storm petrel populations in Atlantic Canada • Attraction of migratory birds to lighting
Indigenous knowledge studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand what is Indigenous knowledge (IK) • Determine if/how IK could be included in research projects
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts and adaptations
Marine mammals and fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve data / knowledge of marine mammals in deeper waters of Newfoundland & Labrador offshore • Data gaps in location of spawning and rearing areas offshore Newfoundland & Labrador • Atlantic salmon migratory behaviours at sea
Coral and sponges communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the potential effects of smothering and drill cutting on coral and sponges communities
Oil spill effects and responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely/effective oil spill treatment strategies • Spill fate and effects (modeling)
Marine noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effect of seismic surveys • Impact of marine noise

2020-2021 Research Projects



Investigating potential toxicological effects of juvenile fish exposure to crude oil and dispersants



Assessment of potential effect of seismic survey on marine groundfish (e.g. Atlantic cod)



Atlantic salmon in the Eastern Canadian offshore regions: timing, duration and the effects of environmental variability and climate change

Important Links

- ✓ ESRF Website: <https://www.esrfunds.org>
- ✓ ESRF project technical reports: <https://www.esrfunds.org/174>
- ✓ Annual Reports: <https://www.esrfunds.org/177>
- ✓ New! Call for Proposals on Seabirds: <https://www.esrfunds.org/181>