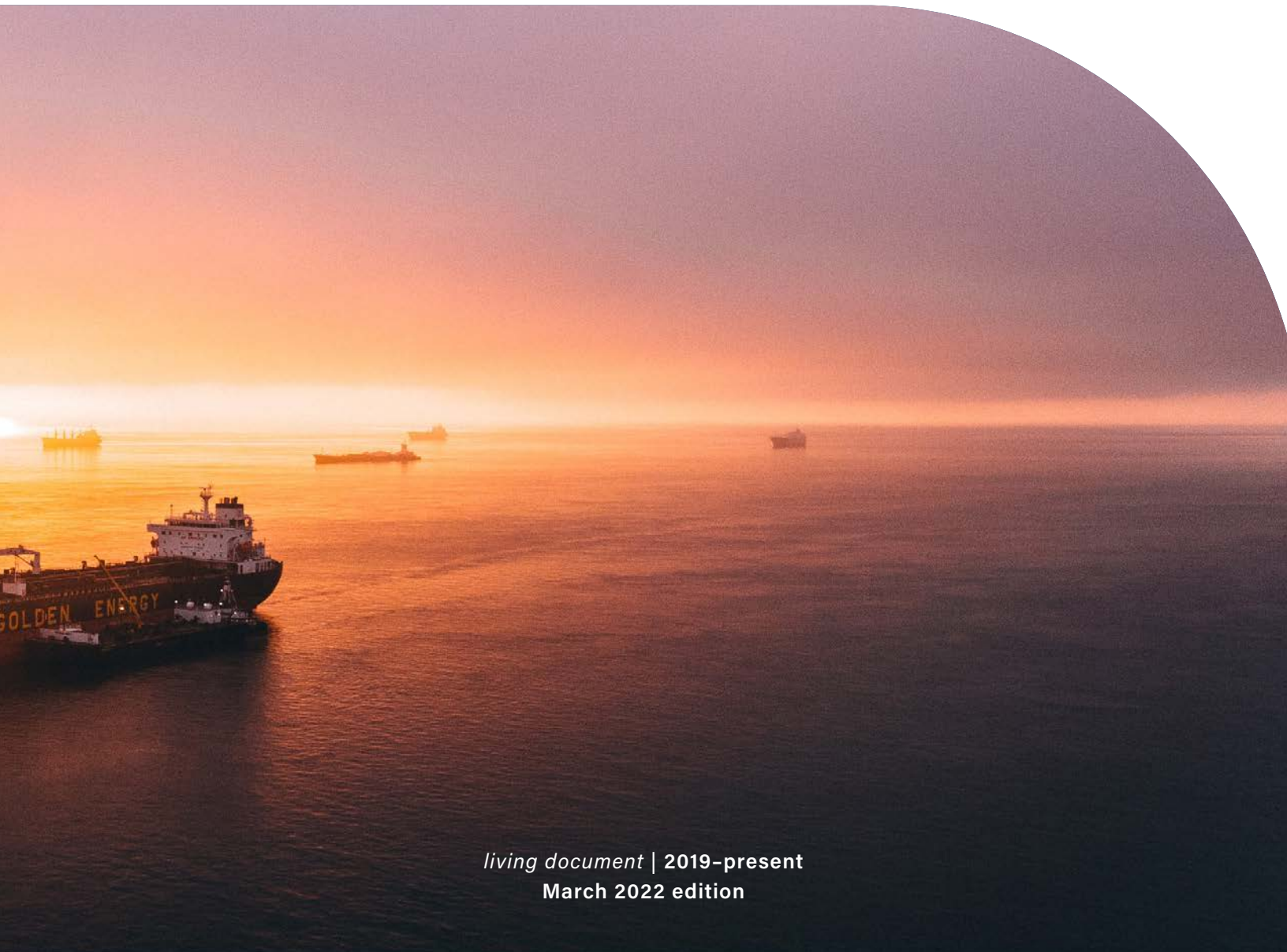




**First Nations
Fisheries Council**
of British Columbia

South Coast BC Engagement Guide

**lessons learned from the CEMS
experience with the VMCC**



living document | 2019–present
March 2022 edition



TABLE of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
KEY TERMS	3
DRAFTING SCHEDULE	5
BACKGROUND & WORK DONE to DATE	6
OPP AND EARLY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW	6
C2AR OVERVIEW	7
VMCC OVERVIEW	8
CEMS IN THE SOUTH COAST OF BC	9
MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS	10
DEFINING SUCCESS FOR CEMS in the South Coast BC	14
KEY CEMS LEARNINGS IN THE SOUTH COAST OF BC	15
IDENTIFIED KEY SUCCESS FACTORS	24

INTRODUCTION

This document serves to provide an account of the learnings associated with work done-to-date (as of Fall, 2021) for the Cumulative Effects of Marine Shipping (CEMS) initiative in the South Coast region of British Columbia and the ongoing working relationship between Transport Canada (TC) and the First Nations Fisheries Council (FNFC).

The document has been jointly developed by TC, FNFC, and with input from individually participating South Coast BC First Nations on the Ship Movement and Vessel Management Coordinating Committee (VMCC)—to provide a comprehensive perspective of lessons learned from the CEMS experience so far.

This document is intended to be widely sharable to government departments, industry, and other South Coast BC Indigenous partners in order to help organizations better understand how they can work effectively with South Coast BC Nations from a regional point of view. It should be noted, however, that every engagement is unique and requires tailoring to the diverse needs of various involved Nations residing in the South Coast of British Columbia.

The document will also be updated as progress continues with the CEMS Initiative for the South Coast of British Columbia. (See *Drafting Schedule p.5*)



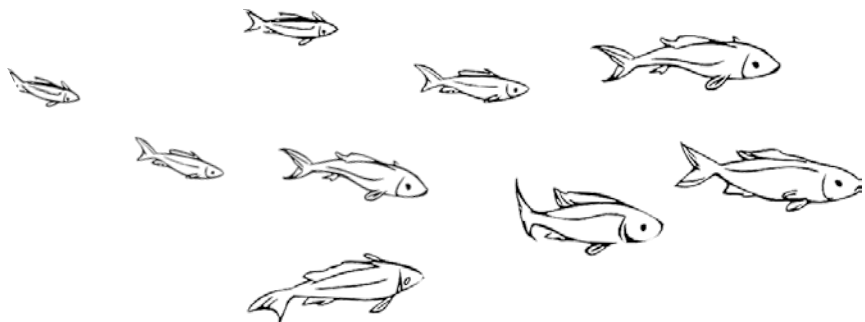
KEY TERMS

TERM	ACRONYM	DEFINITION
Commitment to Action and Results Accord	C2AR	
Canadian Coast Guard	CCG	
Cumulative Effects	CE	
Cumulative Effects of Marine Shipping	CEMS	
Department of Fisheries and Oceans	DFO	
Environment and Climate Change Canada	ECCC	
First Nations Fisheries Council	FNFC	
Joint Coordination Committee	JCC	
Natural Resources Canada	NRCan	
Oceans Protection Plan	OPP	
Project Team		Refers to the combined team from both TC and FNFC
Transport Canada	TC	
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	UNDRIP	
Ship Movement and Vessel Management Coordinating Committee	VMCC	



DRAFTING SCHEDULE

V1	<i>Joint approval, Dec 8, 2021</i>
V2	<i>Joint approval, TBD</i>



BACKGROUND & WORK DONE to DATE

OPP AND EARLY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan (OPP) was launched in 2017 and represented the largest investment the Government of Canada has made to protect national coasts and waterways. The OPP was focused on four priority areas, which includes: building a world-leading marine safety system, strengthening Indigenous partnerships, preserving and restoring marine ecosystems, and creating a stronger evidence base.

The OPP is a whole-of-government strategy led by four federal departments/agencies (TC, DFO, CCG, and ECCC) and places a strong emphasis on the need for collaborative partnerships with Indigenous groups. Within the South Coast of BC region, OPP has engaged a number of South Coast BC First Nations to better understand how the Government of Canada and First Nations could foster this collaborative partnership.

A number of themes and areas of focus came from early engagement activities, which informed current CEMS South Coast BC practices and included:

- » **Investing more time in understanding the concerns, interests, and current practices of local communities.**
- » **Improving the communication and coordination of OPP and other regional initiatives.**
- » **Understanding the importance of UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations in partnership-building.**
- » **Clarifying the use of historical, ongoing input from Indigenous groups and establishing clear protocols for sharing local knowledge.**
- » **Identifying solutions to improve meaningful participation by addressing capacity challenges.**



C2AR OVERVIEW

The Commitment to Actions and Results (C2AR) Accord was developed in 2019 as a response to initial feedback from First Nations that indicated engagement efforts were not effectively addressing the needs of their communities. The C2AR was signed between TC, DFO, CCG, ECCC, and FNFC. The agreement represented a non-legally binding framework that would focus on supporting First Nations involvement in implementing the OPP in the South Coast of BC, through joint work planning efforts.

A number of guiding principles were developed to support the collaborative efforts of the C2AR, which included: **Respect, Inclusiveness, Flexibility, Sustainability, Stewardship**, and **Accountability**. These principles underpin the working relationship between TC and FNFC on shared OPP priorities in the South Coast of BC—and have contributed to a number of positive outcomes such as reduced engagement fatigue in the region and establishing regional commitments to shared priorities.

The C2AR also identified three priority streams of work with associated coordinating committees: Ship Movement and Vessel Management; Marine Research and Science, and Emergency Preparedness and Response.

STREAM 1	STREAM 2	STREAM 3
Priority: Ship Movement and Vessel Management	Priority: Marine Research and Science	Priority: Emergency Preparedness and Response
coordinating committee	coordinating committee	coordinating committee

Each coordinating committee consists of South Coast BC First Nations membership who work alongside representatives from FNFC and Federal Government Departments. This provides a platform to convene South Coast Nations to discuss their respective priorities in a regional context.

VMCC OVERVIEW

The Ship Movement and Vessel Management Coordinating Committee (VMCC) focuses on providing recommendations and feedback related to CEMS, to enhance the participation of South Coast First Nations in governance, planning, and contributions towards advancing Canada’s marine safety and transportation system to better respond to crises that impact Canadian coastlines. The VMCC is providing direction and guidance to the CEMS initiative and is the primary mechanism to advancing the work of CEMS on a regional level in the South Coast of BC.

Throughout the development of this document, feedback and input was elicited from VMCC members to validate lessons and to continuously check that the pace and complexity of the CEMS work was not overburdening VMCC members. Digital tools such as JamBoard and Mentimeter were utilized in the virtual workshops to provide opportunities for VMCC members to collaborate and provide anonymous input into the project design. The discussions provided an opportunity to enhance the project team’s understanding of what was working and what an appropriate project path forward should look like. Some ways in which this input was applied in the CEMS regional process is outlined below.



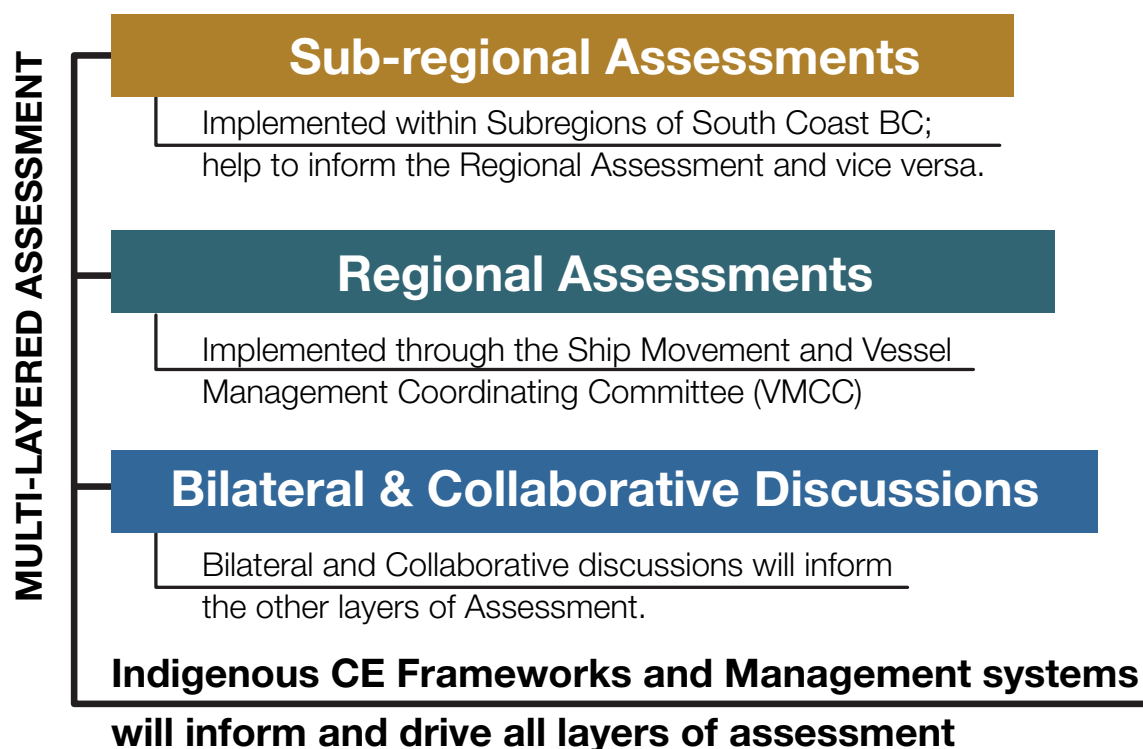
CEMS IN THE SOUTH COAST OF BC

The purpose of the CEMS initiative is to establish a shared, co-developed approach to better understand coastal ecosystems and the potential effects of regional marine shipping activities on the environment and the people surrounding it.

The initiative in the South Coast of BC intends to improve understanding of cumulative effects from marine vessel activities through strengthened collaboration and partnerships between the federal government, Indigenous governments, coastal communities, marine stakeholders and other interested parties.

Two key deliverables of the CEMS initiative are to conduct regional cumulative effects assessments and to develop a national framework to guide and direct cumulative effects activities across Canada.

The South Coast region of BC is one pilot site that has been prioritized by Transport Canada for assessment.



MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The national CEMS initiative began in 2017 with focused engagement work in the South Coast of BC beginning in early 2020 after signing of the C2AR. The initiative has completed a number of milestones to-date, including:

1

VMCC INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP (MARCH 2020)

The introductory workshop to the VMCC was an opportunity to provide a primer of the proposed CEMS initiative, make introductions and seek the VMCC's feedback on how to initiate and design the initiative in the South Coast of BC. Another goal of the workshop was to initiate the ongoing working relationship between the TC CEMS team and VMCC members. During this initial workshop some VMCC members stated that they also wanted to collaborate bilaterally with the TC CEMS team, outside of the regional process, to address localized marine shipping issues. The TC CEMS team therefore created the multi-layered assessment approach and continues to meet sub-regionally with interested Nations.

2

CO-DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIVING WORKPLAN (FALL 2020)

The Living Workplan is an evergreen document that outlines the CEMS project background, key definitions, project goals, resourcing and project process or high level workplan within which the VMCC will undertake work related to implementing a regional CEMS initiative in South Coast BC. The document was jointly developed by TC and FNFC, with input from the VMCC. The Living workplan is meant to be revisited and revised over time to ensure its relevancy to the VMCC and the CEMS initiative in the South Coast of BC.

3

VMCC PLANNING WORKSHOP (OCTOBER 2020)

In this VMCC workshop, the CEMS team finalized the Living Workplan document, and sought feedback from the VMCC on the steps needed for future work. A more detailed presentation and discussion was held on capacity needs and requirements by the VMCC members as well as other resourcing options available.

4

CAPACITY FUNDING SUBMISSIONS (JANUARY 2021)

Through the winter of 2020-2021 TC and the FNFC worked with VMCC members to submit applications for capacity funding to support work for the CEMS regional assessment in the South Coast of BC in accordance with the agreed to Living Workplan. Guidance package materials were developed to provide VMCC members with streamlined directions on completing funding applications for participation in future work.

MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

continued...

5

FNFC INDIGENOUS VALUES WORKSHOPS (FEBRUARY 2021)

The FNFC facilitated two Tier 1 workshops to define and identify Indigenous values on a South Coast of BC regional level; build a list of Indigenous values to inform the scoping phase and subsequent workshops; and to identify project methodologies that embrace these Indigenous values. The suite of values developed in this workshop provided the foundation needed to build out the scoping work in the next set of Tier 2 scoping workshops.

6

VMCC SCOPING WORKSHOP PART 1 (MARCH 2021)

The purpose of this workshop was to begin the process of implementing the second phase of the CEMS project, the scoping phase, as outlined in the Living Workplan. The Committee split into Zoom breakout groups and used Google Jamboards to co-develop a selection of marine shipping issues of concern to South Coast BC First Nations, which can be used to inform the assessment phase. The Committee also reflected on how to weave multiple knowledge systems into the assessment.

7

VMCC SCOPING WORKSHOP PART 2 (MARCH 2021)

The purpose of the second scoping workshop was to continue designing and brainstorming the regional CEMS assessment by building out the different themes of marine shipping issues brought forward by the Committee in workshop #1. The Committee split into Zoom breakout groups and used Google Jamboards to design and brainstorm different themes of shipping effects and found linkages and connections between shipping effects and Indigenous values. The Committee was also provided with Tier 1 space to further discuss the work.

8

VMCC SCOPING WORKSHOP PART 3 (APRIL 2021)

The purpose of the third scoping workshop was to review the work done thus far and provide the Committee with visual results of the first two scoping workshops. The TC team developed pathway of effects wheel diagrams to provide a visual representation of the relationship between the prioritized marine shipping stressors, values, and connections, which were presented to the VMCC. The wheel diagrams were presented in a circular format in order to incorporate the view of weaving multiple knowledge systems together and to help visualize the interconnectedness of the connections felt as a result of the various marine shipping stressors. The Committee was then introduced to the concepts of scoping criteria and how they can be used to further refine the assessment.

MILESTONES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

continued...

9

VMCC KNOWLEDGE SHARING FORUM (MAY 2021)

Through the Knowledge Sharing Forum, the VMCC heard from CEMS pilot projects in Quebec, the Arctic, Gitxaala Nation and Metlakatla First Nation who shared their experience in developing their cumulative effects projects in Canada. The Committee also heard from various subject matter experts who provided an overview of their research or perspectives on approaches to marine and coastal management processes in partnership with Indigenous groups. The sharing of knowledge and ideas allowed the VMCC to further their own knowledge of cumulative effects work (from an Indigenous context) and provided examples of how to continue to refine the CEMS scoping process.

10

VMCC SCOPING WORKSHOP PART 4 (JUNE 2021)

The fourth scoping workshop began by reviewing the scoping process thus far and the scoping criteria brought forward during the Knowledge Sharing Forum. The Committee then split into Zoom break out groups and, using Google Jamboards, brainstormed preferred scoping criteria to apply to the regional inventory of connections to further inform and refine the assessment. A survey was provided to the VMCC post-workshop to provide the opportunity for community feedback to inform the relationship between the scoping criteria inventory of connections and the next set of fall workshops.

11

INDIGENOUS SOUTH COAST CEMS FRAMEWORK (SEPTEMBER 2021)

The FNFC hired consultant James Herbert to work in partnership with VMCC members to develop an Indigenous-led South Coast CEMS Framework. This Framework will support community-level cumulative effects capacity in engaging in the South Coast Regional CEMS Pilot, as well as provide a structure for future Indigenous-led cumulative effects assessments in south coast territories.





DEFINING SUCCESS FOR CEMS IN SOUTH COAST BC

The purpose of the CEMS initiative is to establish a shared, co-developed approach to better understand coastal ecosystems and the potential effects of regional marine shipping activities on the environment and the people surrounding it. The OPP initiative is committed to improve understanding of cumulative effects from marine vessel activities through a collaborative approach to decision making with Indigenous partners. To measure these high level objectives, there are a few identified key measures to monitor progress and define success:

- » **Developing stronger relationships with South Coast Indigenous groups in areas with increased marine shipping;**
- » **Advancing reconciliation through collaborative governance agreements, where possible;**
- » **Increasing awareness and confidence in Canada's marine safety system as well as the practice of regional cumulative effects assessment; and,**
- » **Achieving initiative deliverables, nationally and regionally.**

Additionally, within the South Coast of BC, the partnership of TC and FNFC is guided by the C2AR Accord as both parties are signatories to the agreement. The C2AR encourages collaborative efforts between the signatories that are guided by a number of principles, which include: **Respect, Inclusiveness, Flexibility, Sustainability, Stewardship, and Accountability**. The CEMS initiative strives to uphold these principles and succeed in achieving the collaborative spirit of the C2AR.



KEY CEMS LEARNINGS IN THE SOUTH COAST OF BC

There are a number of factors that have contributed to the success of the CEMS work in South Coast of BC through the TC-FNFC partnership, including:

01. BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP OF OPEN DIALOGUE AND TRUST

Communication is one of the most important factors contributing to the TC-FNFC CEMS relationship and is predicated on two-way dialogue. Both parties are in regular and frequent communication to inform project updates, provide opportunities to brainstorm ideas/solutions, and foster a healthy, ongoing working relationship. The honest and open nature of these communications has contributed to an environment that allows for both parties to feel comfortable in bringing forward ideas and having productive conversations. This process within the CEMS initiative is based on mutual respect and is a reflection of one of the C2AR principles that is intended to guide the working relationship between the Government of Canada and FNFC.

EXAMPLE: ONGOING & FREQUENT TWO-WAY COMMUNICATIONS

The TC and FNFC teams have set up one-hour, weekly re-occurring meetings to debrief on past and current activities, plan for future work, and in general collaborate on advancing the CEMS work forward. The frequent touchpoints between the teams has created an environment that allows for psychological safety, honest dialogue, and has fostered a healthy, trusting working relationship between the two teams. Additionally, the meetings are designed to create equal participation and allows for the free flow of ideas and information between the two teams.

02. DESIGNING TO INCLUDE PROJECT FLEXIBILITY

The CEMS initiative was designed to be collaborative in nature and the project team was cognizant not to allow preconceived notions to bias the work but instead be open and flexible to the input of its partners. The initiative's design has allowed for FNFC and the VMCC to provide direct input on how and when to accomplish key project deliverables. The Living Workplan co-developed by TC, FNFC, and VMCC members outlines a number of functional steps that do not have restrictions on the timing or design of interim deliverables, which adds project flexibility to collaborate over time. Flexibility is one of the C2AR's guiding principles and has been intentionally embedded within the CEMS process, supporting a positive and productive working relationship. steps that do not have restrictions on the timing or design of interim deliverables, which adds project flexibility to collaborate over time. Flexibility is one of the C2AR's guiding principles and has been intentionally embedded within the CEMS process, supporting a positive and productive working relationship.

EXAMPLE: LIVING WORKPLAN ADAPTATION FOR SCOPING PHASE

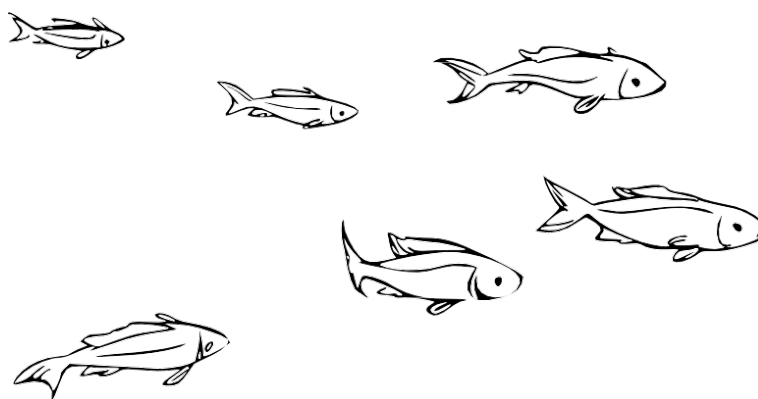
After the finalization of the Living Workplan, which identified key activities and timelines, TC and FNFC worked together to implement the workplan with the VMCC. Through this process there was a need to adjust the timelines and activities, based on the needs and priorities of the VMCC. For example, the Living Workplan had originally identified 3 workshops over 3 months to complete the scoping phase of work. After initial discussions with VMCC members it was clear that members would value more time in selecting assessment priorities for the assessment work and inform this selection with greater community-level input and therefore the Living Workplan was amended to account for these needs.

03. COORDINATING ACTIVITIES AND DISTRIBUTING WORKLOADS

Both the TC CEMS and FNFC teams are small in size with limited capacity. This places an emphasis on the need to be as efficient as possible with project resources and to actively coordinate activities across various projects. Some effective approaches to past work involved the TC CEMS team developing initial drafts of deliverables and incorporating FNFC input and the two parties coordinating outreach communications with First Nations throughout the South Coast to limit engagement fatigue. Coordination does require an effort to regularly and frequently communicate, however, the CEMS experience has demonstrated that investments in coordination can provide efficiency and implementation benefits to the project work.

EXAMPLE: PREPARATION FOR CEMS VMCC WORKSHOPS

The typical planning process for a CEMS workshop is a good demonstration of effective coordination between the TC CEMS and FNFC teams. Both teams collaborate on identifying a date, identifying meeting objectives, and crafting an agenda. FNFC leads the communications efforts with First Nations, manages the meeting e-vites via the Zoom platform, and facilitates the workshop event. While the TC CEMS team generally develops the meeting materials, presents project updates, leads discussion on the workshop materials, and coordinate capacity funding for participants. Throughout the planning process, both teams meet regularly to discuss and review all materials and deliverables prior to workshops and debrief together post-workshop.



04. PLANNING TO INCORPORATE LOCAL ISSUES

Despite the South Coast of BC CEMS pilot being regional in nature, the inclusion of localized issues was identified by First Nations throughout the South Coast as an important component to the success of the initiative. The VMCC provided an efficient mechanism to convene and discuss regional CE matters but Nations still wanted to ensure that their unique, individual voices and marine shipping concerns were not lost within the regional process. That is why the TC- CEMS team created a multi-layered assessment and engagement approach that incorporates engagement processes that are held concurrently at the regional level through the VMCC and sub-regional/bilateral level. Nations that are interested in pursuing more localized marine shipping issues could either choose to work with neighbouring Nations to form a sub-regional assessment or choose to work with TC on a bilateral basis. This approach provided multiple channels and opportunities for Nations to be involved in the CEMS initiative to facilitate widespread buy-in into the initiative and allow the engagement process to be relevant to Nations' needs and interests.

EXAMPLE: THE T'SOU-KE COMMUNITY SURVEY

The T'Sou-ke Nation has been involved in the CEMS initiative both regionally through the VMCC as well as on a bilateral level—which have helped to inform one another. For the scoping phase on the subregional level, T'Sou-ke was interested in using a community survey to get community-level input to help scope the subregional assessment. FNFC supported the development of this community survey, which was later widely circulated with other Nations across the region that had expressed an interest in taking a similar approach to help scope other subregional assessments.

05. PROVIDING TIME FOR TIER 1 AND COMMUNITY-LEVEL DISCUSSION

An important planning element that has contributed to the success of the CEMS initiative was the provision of time for Nations to meet and discuss the initiative amongst themselves and internally within their communities. The CEMS workplan was designed to allow for space between workshops for VMCC members to discuss and receive feedback from leadership, knowledge holders, and community members to inform the initiative. Additionally, the workplan considers the need for Tier 1 meetings and workshops that are scheduled without government involvement. These Tier 1 meetings create an opportunity for Nations to discuss aspects of the CEMS project more freely, provide high-level input into the CEMS process through the FNFC, and validate proposed project approaches. The inclusion of Tier 1 and community discussions in the workplan has benefitted the initiative overall by ensuring that CEMS processes and deliverables were relevant to the needs of the VMCC as well as the values and interests of their respective communities.

EXAMPLE: COMMUNITY LEVEL INPUT TO INFORM SCOPING PHASE

The scoping phase of the CEMS initiative included a number of monthly, Tier 2 workshops (that included government involvement) through the spring of 2021 that focused on identifying assessment priorities. After each of these Tier 2 workshops FNFC coordinated Tier 1 meetings to allow VMCC members to discuss the contents of the Tier 2 workshops and other components of the CEMS project. VMCC members were also offered capacity funding to hold discussions within their communities in between scoping workshops. Additionally, after a list of assessment priorities and scoping criteria were jointly developed, VMCC members were provided a few months over the summer to incorporate community-level input before workshops resumed in the fall.

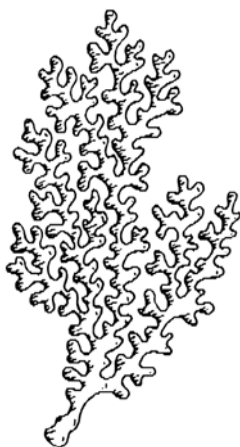


06. ALLOCATING ACCESSIBLE CAPACITY FUNDING

The CEMS initiative secured a capacity funding source through TC's Community Participation Funding Program (CPFP) early on in the planning phase, which would compensate Nations for their work and time to prepare for, attend, and debrief from CEMS activities (predominantly VMCC workshops). CPFP was designed to support short-term, ad-hoc engagement activities and not originally intended to facilitate ongoing, frequent engagements. This limitation placed an additional administrative burden on Nations, which the project team attempted to reduce by communicating early and frequently and developing guidance materials to assist VMCC members in completing applications.

EXAMPLE: CPFP GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Understanding that access and availability of capacity funding were equally important to Nations, the project team developed guidance materials aimed at enhancing access and reducing the time requirements to fill out funding applications. These guidance documents provided step-by-step instructions to complete the applications with visuals; recommended text to use in the application based on the Living Workplan language and workshop objectives, and recommended expense estimates that were based on capacity needs and rates that the VMCC had agreed upon during the planning phase of the initiative.



07. PROVIDING ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH PROJECT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The TC-CEMS and FNFC project team has a regular cadence of weekly check-in meetings with rolling agendas that have helped in identifying ongoing roles/responsibilities; coordinating efforts between the two teams; communicating project updates; and reviewing and discussing materials. Additionally, the designation of project management roles has been beneficial to provide an environment of accountability within the project team and to generally keep the momentum of the project going. It has been effective in ensuring that both teams are on the same page, which is an important element of a collaborative working partnership.

EXAMPLE: TOOLS TO GUIDE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The project team established a Dropbox folder allowing for the easy collaborative development of project documents and centralized storage of materials/deliverables. The project also utilizes regular meeting agenda's that guided discussion and capture previous and ongoing action items for follow up. These tools help to facilitate the free flow of ideas and clarity on roles and responsibilities, ensuring team accountability in continuing to move the CEMS initiative forward.

08. LINKING CEMS WORK WITH OTHER INITIATIVES

Throughout the South Coast CEMS regional pilot, the team has proactively explored new opportunities to link CEMS work with other ongoing work in the region. This has helped to align the CEMS project with other ongoing priorities and to reduce the capacity needed by South Coast First Nations to meaningfully participate across multiple projects.

EXAMPLE: JCC KNOWLEDGE SHARING FORUMS

An activity in the CEMS Living Workplan was a 'Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration Workshop' that was included to provide an opportunity to share lessons learned from experts and professionals specifically on CE best practices. The activity was generally identified in the workplan with limited specifics, which provided flexibility for the CEMS project team to form the activity over time. "The activity expanded into a three-part series of sharing forums that would support other related projects such as, marine spatial planning and marine emergency environmental recovery.

09. DEVELOPING A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH WITH THE VMCC

Throughout the CEMS process, the project team has actively sought the input and validation of Committee members on the process, the principles and values that guide the project, and the pace of the work. Regular bilateral check-ins with members were also conducted to ensure that expectations were being met and involvement was meaningful. Online engagement tools were used to elicit anonymous feedback to gain a better understanding of the collective needs and priorities of the VMCC, as well as the individual perspectives on workshop activities. The collective data was helpful in guiding the CEMS process as a whole, ensuring that the pacing or complexity did not hinder the meaningful involvement of VMCC members in the CEMS process.

EXAMPLE: VMCC INPUT TO VALIDATE CEMS APPROACHES

Throughout the CEMS process, the project team has worked together to design Tier 2 workshops and consider how to elicit and incorporate VMCC input in each session. Typically, these workshop agendas provide time to reflect on past VMCC input, identify how that input is being used to inform the initiative moving forward, and use online engagement tools to elicit new input from VMCC members.

For example in one virtual workshop exercise, VMCC members were asked a series of questions using the online engagement tool Mentimeter. Questions were asked that resulted in collective, anonymous ratings that were evaluated to ensure the pacing of the progress of the CEMS process aligned with VMCC members comfort level and that everyone had the same level of understanding of the work before moving forward.





SUCCESS FACTORS

The lessons learned through the CEMS process may serve as indicators for what successful engagement can look like in the South Coast of BC. They provide examples of how marine initiatives can move forward by involving and partnering with First Nations to ensure their interests are considered and incorporated from the initial planning stages. Some identified key success factors from the CEMS experience are included below that could be taken into consideration for work in the South Coast of BC.



Commit to Early and Ongoing Relationship Building	Relationship building and trust takes time to build between groups in a partnership and often requires more time than what is allocated for specific project timelines, meaning it is a factor often overlooked. That is why it is important to anticipate longer timelines to foster working relationships, incorporate longitudinally with project work over time, and build off of existing relationships or work (when you can).
Understand the Macroscopic Environment to Realize Synergies	It's important to understand partner interests and priorities within on-going work to develop win-win situations for all groups involved and identify limitations to inform work planning and prioritization efforts (such as capacity constraints). Be proactive in identifying common areas for cooperation with other current work or initiatives. Embrace a flexible approach that isn't restricted by pre-conceived notions.
Respect the Nation-to-Nation relationship even in Regional Approaches	There is a balance that needs to be made between regional and bilateral involvement in the process. The CEMS multi-layered assessment approach has been effective in understanding broader regional views while also allowing for bilateral and collaborative discussions that respect individual Nation priorities. It's key to provide different channels and opportunities that allow Nations to determine their preferred method of involvement.
Facilitate Opportunities for Meaningful Two-Way Dialogue	Consider the development of communication mechanisms and processes that incorporate First Nations output, input, and feedback. Maintain these processes throughout the life of the project and consider how this input can inform the project.
Proactively Provide Capacity Support	Actively look for ways to address capacity issues and explore 'outside the box' solutions to address First Nations capacity needs through work flow design, an evaluation of resourcing options and guidance, and a recognition of synergies with other work, etc.
Devote Effort in Project Management Best Practices	Create frequent and regular calls/touchpoints to build momentum and maintain partnership trust throughout the project. Early on establish roles/responsibilities for involved team members and develop accountability mechanisms such as rolling agendas, evergreen workplans, project status trackers, shared work spaces, etc.



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