

Call for Ideas:

Potential case studies for a new fisheries research network to be explored at a strategic workshop

**Proposed Theme: A research network to support fisheries management in a
changing environment**

Submission Deadline: Wednesday, July 8, 2015

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Overview

The [Canadian Fisheries Research Network](#) (CFRN) has successfully linked industry, academia and government across Canada in collaborative research on issues of direct relevance to industry and management. The CFRN was launched in 2010 with five years of funding from the [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada](#) (NSERC). Given that the Network is nearing the end of its term (December 2015) and there is interest in continuing the established research collaboration, the CFRN is holding a workshop to explore the development of a new fisheries research network. A proposed theme for a new network that has emerged from discussions within the CFRN is: *Research to support fisheries management in a changing environment*. This call for ideas seeks potential case studies that could be included in a research network under this theme, for further discussion and development at the workshop.

Background and rationale

The CFRN has demonstrated beyond doubt that there is very valuable scientific expertise related to the ecological, social, economic, and governance (institutional) aspects of fisheries in Canadian universities that is of great benefit to the Canadian government, the commercial fishing industry and its management systems. The CFRN has also shown that it is possible to productively link this academic expertise with industry and government in co-constructed, collaborative research around questions of critical importance to Canada's fisheries.

The CFRN partners (academia, industry, government) have clearly indicated that they value the Network experience and generally would like the research collaboration to continue after the CFRN ends. There are some key knowledge gaps and areas of investigation in fisheries that

require a collaborative approach, whether building on existing work or tackling new strategic areas, which the CFRN is uniquely positioned to scope and pursue.

Over the past two years, the CFRN has been encouraging and supporting opportunities for continuing specific collaborations through strategic research grants and workshops. While there may be opportunities for several targeted grants based on existing CFRN collaborations, there is also considerable CFRN partner interest in exploring a new network proposal that would further develop national capacity for strategic collaboration among academia, industry and government around the country's most critical fishery management issues.

An emerging theme – Adapting to change

From discussions within the CFRN over the last two years¹, a recurring and overarching topic has emerged: the critical need for **research to support Canadian fisheries management in responding to ecological and institutional change**. The Network Secretariat² believes this theme poses a spectrum of research challenges spanning many disciplines (ecological, social, economic, institutional), representing the best opportunity to build on the experience of the CFRN and to address the most urgent challenges facing our management system.

Background to the theme

Canada's progress to date on fisheries sustainability (including the current [Sustainable Fisheries Framework](#)) has resulted in strategies for applying the precautionary approach in a context of ecological stability. However, there is much empirical evidence that Canada's fisheries and fishery ecosystems are already in a period of great instability, and that our management system is not sufficiently equipped to adapt. Further, there is ongoing movement to more participatory fisheries governance that requires new approaches and capacity development. To support this adaptation, there is need for research in several areas, including but not limited to:

- Data collection and fishery assessment methods that will provide informative, useful data required for more comprehensive evaluation at reduced costs and with more robust, reliable results.
- Structured multi-stakeholder decision-making processes that are based on ecological, social and economic risk-assessment and trade-offs. There is a need for comprehensive review and possibly restructuring of how Canadian fisheries management systems and approaches to

¹ Discussions about post-CFRN research collaboration have taken place at the February 2014 Annual General Meeting during the 'Open Space' exercise, at the Board of Directors meeting in June 2014, at CFRN project meetings and in their margins (*e.g.*, Project 1.1 meeting in September 2014, West Coast Node meeting in November 2014, Lobster Node meetings in January 2014 and 2015) and with DFO Assistant Deputy Ministers of Science and Management in December 2014.

² Network Principal Investigator (Rob Stephenson), Facilitator (Marc Allain) and Manager (Susan Thompson)

providing scientific support have developed around making trade-offs among ecological and socio-economic objectives. The Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) approach offers some particularly useful methods in this realm that have not yet been applied fully or systematically in Canada.

- Targeted social and economic impact research to support decision-making processes involving multiple objectives.
- Effective governance structures particular to the Canadian context and specific fisheries to support decision-making processes involving multiple objectives.

The research of the CFRN, especially the collaboration among projects around a framework for comprehensive evaluation of fisheries, provides a useful basis to further develop a strategic research program that could address these areas.

Workshop to develop a new fisheries research network

A 2-3 day workshop will be held in August or September 2015 to discuss a post-CFRN network proposal under the theme of *research to support fisheries management in responding to ecological and institutional change*. The workshop will bring together interested participants (30-40) from industry, government and academia to:

- Deliberate on and further define the proposed research theme.
- Discuss funding opportunities.
- Define elements of a network proposal including key participants, case studies and a network narrative.

The workshop will be built around discussion of Canadian fishery case studies related to the theme. Proponents are invited to submit ideas for case studies by Wednesday, July 8, 2015. This call for ideas for case studies is being issued broadly, both within the CFRN and beyond.

Participating researchers and partners will be tasked with identifying research needs (related to ecological, social, economic and/or institutional domains) particular to each case study with an emphasis on complementary, interdisciplinary research initiatives. In addition to key representatives of the proposed case studies, the workshop will include appropriate representation from governments, the fishing industry, and potential funding agencies (including both NSERC and SSHRC).

The workshop will also include time for participants to meet around smaller, auxiliary initiatives of interest (either new or previously identified) to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by this face-to-face meeting.

Proposal content

The proposal is limited to a **maximum of 2 pages**. Please note that full proposals are not expected at this stage; rather, this call is for proposed ideas for case studies for discussion and further development at the workshop. The proposal must include the following sections and content.

Section A: General Information

- Proposed project or case study title
- Proposed Project Leader(s) name and affiliation
- A list of proposed research partners (academia, industry and government) and their affiliation. Projects must include all three partners to be eligible.

Section B: Proposal

- Proposed research area(s) and questions addressed.
- A statement about which domain(s) (ecological, social, economic, institutional) are addressed by the research (*i.e.*, disciplinary scope).
- A description of how the project or case study addresses the theme of management adaptation to change.
- Anticipated participation by collaborators and training of highly qualified personnel (master, doctoral and/or post-doctoral levels).
- Anticipated outcomes and benefits of the proposed research to Canadian fisheries.

Examples of potential case studies:

- Management adaptation in the midst of regime shift in the NAFO 2J3KL Area. (Recovery of Northern cod, anticipated decline in invertebrate fisheries, and consideration of fisheries in relation to regional economic development.)
- Management adaptation in applying the precautionary approach in an effort controlled fishery in a context of ecological change – the development of sustainability indicators for lobster.

Review Procedure and Selection Criteria

Workshop participation is limited by travel funding. A planning team of industry, academic and government representatives appointed by the CFRN Board of Directors will review the proposals, in relation to participation in the workshop, based on the following criteria.

- Collaborative nature of the research.
- Interdisciplinary nature of the research.

- Novelty of the research.
- Strategic nature of the research in addressing a critical need in Canadian fisheries management.
- Applied nature of the research in supporting Canadian fisheries management in a changing environment.
- Regional balance with regard to a national network.