



Native Women's
Association of Canada

L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada

DFO

Modernizing Offsetting and Fish Habitat Banking

ACCESSIBLE LANGUAGE

02



Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Pêches et Océans Canada



Modernizing Offsetting and Fish Habitat Banking

To improve the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitats across Canada, the Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program (FFHPP) of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is modernizing its offsetting and banking policies.



What is Offsetting?

- **Offsetting refers** to any action that can be taken to offset or counterbalance the negative effects of a proposed project on fish and fish habitats.
- **Offsetting could include** actions to restore or enhance a fish habitat or other measures that may benefit fish or fish habitats.

What is Habitat Banking?

- **Habitat banking involves** the creation of one or more conservation projects (measures to restore or improve fish habitats in an area) to offset anticipated adverse impacts on fish and fish habitats from a future development project.
- **The benefits** derived from the conservation projects will be deposited as habitat credits in a fish habitat bank. The habitat credits from the development project can be used when a request for authorization is made to offset any adverse effect on fish habitats related to the proposed project.





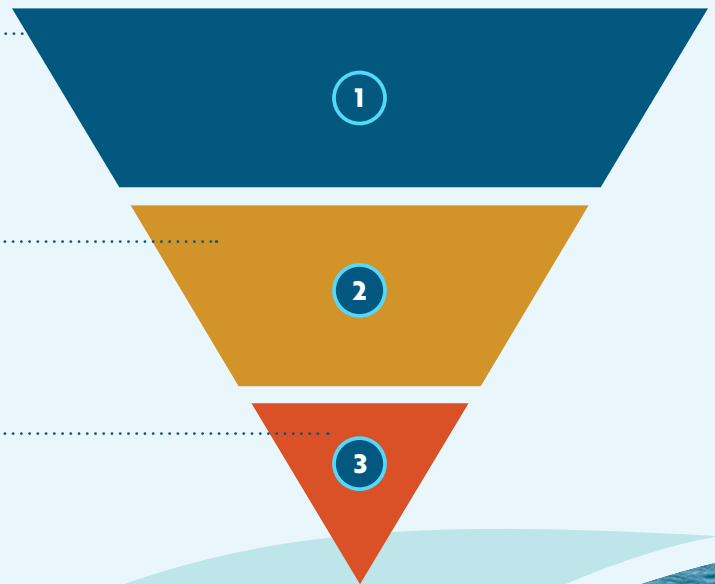
Hierarchy of Measures

When a proposed development project has the potential to disrupt or harm fish and fish habitats, a series of measures are needed. These are referred to as the hierarchy of measures.

- ✓ The hierarchy of measures has been established based on international best practices to reduce risk to biodiversity. However, they have been adjusted to fit the needs of fish and fish habitat protection.

HIERARCHY OF MEASURES:

-
Avoid adverse effects on fish and fish habitats.
-
Mitigate (reduce or minimize) adverse effects on fish and fish habitats
-
Offset (or counterbalance) residual adverse effects on fish and fish habitats.





Hierarchy of Measures in Practice

1

First and foremost, efforts should be made to prevent (avoid) negative impacts on fish and fish habitats.

2

When avoidance is no longer possible, efforts should then be made to minimize (mitigate) the severity of impacts on fish and fish habitats.

3

Finally, as a last resort, any residual or inevitable impacts should be counterbalanced (offset) with positive contributions to the aquatic ecosystem.

Next steps

The DFO's efforts to modernize offsetting and banking policies have already begun, and engagement with Indigenous Peoples has been an important key to this process. Wave Three of engagement is now approaching, and Indigenous Peoples can provide input on the scope, concepts, and approach to modernizing these policies.



What's next?

NWAC's Engagement in Modernizing Offsetting and Fish Habitat Banking

To ensure that the perspectives of Indigenous Women, Girls, Two-Spirit, Transgender, and Gender-Diverse+ (WG2STGD+) Peoples are included in the DFO's policies and programs to improve the management of fish and fish habitats, NWAC will be hosting engagement activities related to **Modernizing Offsetting and Fish Habitat Banking**.

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DFO's Engagement in Modernizing Offsetting and Fish Habitat Banking

For more information on Modernizing Offsetting and Fish Habitat Banking, please visit the DFO's Talk Fish Habitat engagement portal at talkfishhabitat.ca

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You can register to receive email notifications to participate in engagement activities using the **FFHP Registration portal**



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