



CRI

Centre for Regulatory Innovation

Regulators' Capacity Fund

Environment and
Climate Change
Canada (ECCC)

1 September 2020 – 31
March 2022

\$250,000

Regulatory Discovery Tool Project (Regulatory Metadata)

The regulatory discovery tool (metadata) project aimed to address feedback received from ECCC stakeholders indicating that they face difficulties finding regulatory information, particularly around substances. These difficulties lead to challenges understanding and complying with regulations. The project also directly supported ECCC's initiative to develop a single digital portal, called the *Regulatory Discovery Tool*, to improve access to regulatory information.

While advancing this initiative, ECCC identified that the absence of relevant and accurate regulatory metadata was a persistent challenge to the development of any digital tools for regulations. A robust regulatory metadata framework would allow for the use of artificial intelligence, machine reading, and the development of new digital tools that can generate valuable insights (e.g., list compliance requirements) from regulatory information and serve to build the regulatory discovery tool.

ECCC undertook a project to identify and collect relevant metadata for federal regulations. In the first phase, we conducted a comprehensive consultation with industry and other external and internal stakeholders to understand and map regulatory information needs throughout the business and regulatory cycles. During the second phase, we developed a metadata labelling framework and process, and collaborated with the Canada School of Public Service to develop a solution to enable the labelling of all federal regulations in a prototype environment. ECCC and the School co-led a team of specialists that completed metadata labelling for 1,919 federal environmental regulations. The metadata labelling prototype is the first of this kind to be developed in the federal government.

In addition to laying the foundation for ECCC's Regulatory Discovery Tool, the metadata generated through this project may be used to support the development of digital discovery tools in other regulatory departments. The facilitated ability to quickly search and analyze federal regulations across departments and subject matters would greatly support regulators in their work and stakeholders in understanding and complying with regulations.