

# Evaluation of the EC Professional Development Program at Environment and Climate Change Canada

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**DATE:** July 16, 2021



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## Summary

1. The Environment and Climate Change Canada Economics and Social Science Services Professional Development Program (EC-PDP) is a three-year professional development program based on progressing through three levels of classification from EC-02 to EC-05, each step lasting at least twelve months.
2. The purpose of the present evaluation of the EC-PDP is to produce an objective, independent third-party analysis of performance and efficiency to inform and make recommendations to the department's senior management team to support decisions on the future of the initiative. The evaluation is based on available documentation, surveys of EC staff and unit managers, group interviews, and qualitative staff feedback.
3. Given the competition in EC recruitment, there is a justification for an EC development program. However, the specific objectives of the program could be better articulated around the three notions of recruitment, retention, and development.
4. Based on the accumulated evidence, the evaluation concludes that the EC-PDP performs well as a recruitment tool. As a retention strategy, however, the results are more mixed both in terms of retention during the program as well as after graduation. There is ample evidence that EC-PDP participants are not getting special development treatment; in fact, there is no development advantage to being included in the program.
5. The program is managed by branches for their recruitment and retention benefits. There is a majority view that a department-wide vision of the program would generate more benefits for staff and for the organization.
6. The program revolves around filling out an assessment booklet to support promotion within the EC-PDP. This tool receives near unanimous criticism, being seen as unnecessarily long, cumbersome, bureaucratic, and demanding. In parallel, the promotion assessment process is not integrated with the Directive on Performance Management which adds to the burden.
7. While program guidelines clearly indicate that twelve months is the minimum duration at each level, official promotion data suggest that this is used as a standard as opposed to a floor. Several managers and some staff have expressed concern that participants have an expectation of being promoted every twelve months.
8. The program raises several equity issues relative to predictability, fairness, and transparency. Also, no consideration is currently given to diversity and inclusion concerns in the EC-PDP.
9. The evaluation recommends that the EC-PDP be redesigned around the notion of professional development, that a systemic analysis be conducted of diversity and inclusion considerations, and that a formative evaluation of the renewed program be conducted three years after the beginning of its implementation.

## Context and assignment

10. HR initiatives have been introduced at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to address recruitment and retention issues and to meet skills needs. A program targeted to the EC<sup>1</sup> classification was reviewed and implemented in 2012: the Economics and Social Science Services Professional Development Program (EC-PDP).
11. The EC-PDP is a three-year department-wide professional development program.<sup>2</sup> It is based on progressing through three levels of classification, each lasting at least twelve months; it is open to all indeterminate EC-classified employees working within levels -02, -03, and -04 in positions that were identified by managers for this purpose. The purpose of the program is to take participants from the EC-02 group and support promotion through the program until graduation to an indeterminate appointment into an EC-05 position via a non-advertised selection process. More information on the initiative is presented in appendix.
12. The purpose of the present evaluation of the EC-PDP is to produce an objective, independent third-party analysis of performance and efficiency to inform and make recommendations to the department's senior management team to support decisions on the future of the initiative. It is understood that questions have been raised by members of the ECCC management team, by participants and graduates of the EC-PDP, and by the union representing EC-classified employees concerning various aspects of the program governance and administration. The evaluation examines documented results from the EC-PDP and compares the initiative against other similar professional development programs within ECCC and other federal departments.
13. This is the summary list of evaluation questions. A detailed list is presented in an appendix.
  - Is there still a need for this initiative? If the EC-PDP is to continue, what should its objectives be?
  - How does the EC-PDP perform as a recruitment and retention tool?
  - If the EC-PDP is to continue, how should it be structured and managed?
  - If the program is to continue, are there aspects of the program that could be improved?<sup>3</sup>
  - Regarding administration, if the program is to continue, how should it be administered?
  - How can the program best support the Government of Canada diversity and inclusion goals as well as ECCC goals and the anti-racism, equity, and inclusion goals for the Federal Public Service?<sup>4</sup>
14. The evaluation is based on the following complementary methodologies.

<sup>1</sup> Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada (2017) Economics and social science services (EC) group - Job Evaluation Standard, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/collective-agreements/job-evaluation/economics-social-science-services-job-evaluation-standard.html>

<sup>2</sup> Participants may move through the process more rapidly or slower.

<sup>3</sup> In the text, answers to this question were merged in the sections on performance and design parameters.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/corporate/clerk/message-deputy-ministers-heads-separate-agencies-heads-federal-agencies.html>

15. HRB produced **basic information** on the ECCC staff active in the EC category between April 2012 and August 2020. The available information included their status of participation in the EC-PDP, their dates of promotion, and their current employment status at ECCC.
16. An analysis of **available documentation** which included general EC-related information, program guidelines, and data compilations.
17. A **survey of EC staff** was implemented in March 2021. Some 278 ECCC employees active in the EC category between April 2012 and August 2020 were invited and 159 completed the questionnaire.
18. A **survey of unit managers** was conducted in March 2021. A total of 56 managers managing EC staff were invited to complete the questionnaire; 39 did.
19. Fifteen **group interviews** lasting 30 to 80 minutes were conducted with a total of 35 managers and with representatives from Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE).
20. Further **staff feedback** was obtained through an open townhall meeting (7 participants) and voluntary written submissions (8).
21. Eleven **other development programs** from other departments and agencies were reviewed based on available documentation, evaluation reports where available, and interviews where possible.<sup>5</sup>
22. The analysis is based on 198 survey questionnaires and on some 600 qualitative data points.
23. While the evaluation counts on rich information obtained through surveys and interviews with staff and managers, administrative data objectively tracking career paths of EC-PDP participants and non-participants are not considered fully reliable given some known erroneous and missing data. Additionally, available information on development initiatives in other departments and agencies is uneven with some benefiting from detailed data and evaluation analyses while others are only documented through promotional publications. Notwithstanding these limitations, the evaluation offers views of the EC-PDP from enough well-represented perspectives to provide well-founded conclusions.

<sup>5</sup> The programs were : Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC) Economics and Social Science Services Development Program (ESSSDP); Cross-Functional Policy Mobility Program (XFN); Finance Canada Advanced Policy Analyst Program (APAP); Department of National Defence (DND) Policy Officer Recruitment Programme (PORP); Health Canada (HC), Science Management Development Program (SMDP); Infrastructure Canada (IC) EC Development Program (ECDP); Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) EC Career Development Program (ECCDP); Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) Policy Analyst Recruitment and Development Program (PARDP); Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) Intern Officer Development Program (IODP); Recruitment of Policy Leaders (RPL); Statistics Canada (SC) EC Recruitment and Development (ECRD).

# Observations

## Need

24. This section addresses the question of need: Is there still a need for this initiative? If the EC-PDP is to continue, what should its objectives be?
25. The PDP targets ECs. Based on HRB data, there were upwards of 220 ECs at the EC-02 to EC-04 levels at ECCC as of December 2020 (133 of them in the EC-PDP program), out of 817 ECs and 7,326 employees in the department<sup>6</sup>, making it a numerically important classification in the department.
26. The core objective of the EC-PDP is to ensure a cadre of qualified analysts for ECCC. There are three justifications at play in an employee development program:
  - recruiting personnel in number and quality;
  - developing personnel to the degree that they can contribute to the objectives of the department; and,
  - retaining personnel so that staff can provide continued quality contribution to the department.
27. Asked about their objectives in using the EC-PDP, a majority of managers indicated that recruitment was their first concern. During interviews, managers indicated that the EC recruitment market is highly competitive: candidate ECs can find work in several federal departments and agencies, many of which have EC development programs in place. Many managers consider that, without the EC-PDP, it would be very difficult for them to recruit ECs; meanwhile, other managers do hire EC staff without using the PDP.
28. Several managers added that, because it gives ECs a career path forward, it also supports the retention objective that is less prevalent than recruitment but still significant.
29. The third element of need, staff development, is less present on the list of managers' objectives. There is general agreement that development is a responsibility of managers (or of the manager-staff dyad) and that the EC-PDP is not equipped to support this aspect of need – notwithstanding the language of the program guidelines. Meanwhile, several indicated that some EC competencies cannot be acquired outside the federal public service as is the case for many other classifications and that ECCC must therefore contribute to their development to ensure the competencies it needs to deliver on its mandate.
30. Accelerated promotions are not the only argument for recruitment purposes; alluring prospects of professional development that are building blocks of a successful career and are transferable to other job environments could also be part of the benefits for a recruitment and retention program. It simply is not the case for the EC-PDP now.
31. Based on the information gathered, there appears to be a justification for an EC development program. While the general objective of ensuring a cadre of qualified analysts for ECCC is

<sup>6</sup> HR Statistics Overview, December 2020.

supported by managers, the specific objectives of the program could be better articulated around the three notions of recruitment, retention, and development – the latter one being of lesser importance at this point but a potentially major lever to attain the first two.

## Performance

32. This section addresses the issue of program performance: How does the EC-PDP perform as a recruitment and retention tool?
33. HRB supplied information on 288 individuals working in EC positions who were active at ECCC between April 2012 and August 2020. Eighty-five (or 30%) were not involved in the EC-PDP which means that, during this period, 70% of ECs were in the program.
34. Of the 203 involved in the PDP between 2012 and 2020, 70 have graduated to the EC-05 level (or 34%) and 38 (19%) are inactive – which means that they have moved to an advertised EC position, to a non-EC position or have left the department before graduation; 95 are active participants – which is a normal number given that the usual program intake is about 35 per year.
35. Regarding the performance of the EC-PDP at supporting recruitment, 64% of program participants indicated that the program was very important or extremely important in their decision to accept a position at ECCC; another 9% stated that it was “somewhat” important. This supports the view of most managers who make recruitment their main objective in using the program and believe it to be effective in this regard.
36. Regarding the performance of the EC-PDP at retention of personnel, two dimensions must be considered: retention through the program and retention after graduation. Two-thirds of program participants (65%) indicated that the EC-PDP was very or extremely important in their decision to remain in the department; another 23% indicated that it was “somewhat” important. Based on comments left by respondents, this assessment appears to refer to retention through the program.
37. Retention until graduation should be an obvious objective for the program since individuals were hired to bring them up to the EC-05 level. As of now, the only mechanism available to retain staff until graduation is a set of rapid promotions which draw criticism from many managers and some staff who are of the view that promotions are (1) too rapid to allow for proper development and (2) become expected after a period of 12 months (even if the program guidelines present the 12-month period as a minimum, not a standard). Currently, 61% of managers indicate that all EC-PDP graduates they hired met all the requirements to be functional EC-05s. Thus, the tools for retention to graduation must be revisited.
38. Establishing ambitious development objectives for EC-PDP participants could be a key tool for retention of PDP participants. The bet is that the promise of a structured, organized, recognized development program leading to a well-rounded analyst with a large perspective on ECCC in particular and on the federal government in general would act as an attractor at recruitment and as a magnet at retention. Such an approach is in place in all other development programs reviewed as part of this evaluation.

39. In terms of retention after graduation, based on HRB data, while 70% of the EC-PDP graduates still work for ECCC, 92% of non-participants who have reached EC-05 within ECCC still work for ECCC. This would suggest that the EC-PDP is not very effective at retaining employees within the department after graduation. Based on interviews and survey comments, it can be conjectured that EC-PDP participants having been given several rapid promotions may have developed an expectation of rapid progression that is not sustainable within ECCC beyond the EC-05 level. Correcting for this false expectation during the program period could help improve retention post-program.
40. HRB data indicates that, between April 2012 and August 2020, EC-PDP participants have been promoted from EC-02 to EC-03 within an average of 13 months<sup>7</sup>, from EC-03 to EC-04 within an average of 14 months, and from EC-04 to EC-05 within an average of 17 months. These data must be interpreted with great care because they do not net out the effect of leaves<sup>8</sup> on the time-to-promotion and may therefore be artificially inflated. We also do not have comparative and reliable data for non-participants.
41. In group interviews, some managers raised concerns that the use of facilitated promotions as a recruitment and retention tool could lead to the graduation of EC-05s who do not possess the competencies expected at that level, notwithstanding the mechanism in place to validate graduation. Survey results do not support this view: among the 13 managers who were in a position to make a comparison, 8 indicated that EC-PDP graduates were of equal caliber to non-graduates at the EC-05 level; 4 stated that they were of higher caliber; and 1 that they were of lower caliber.
42. It is not obvious that retention after graduation is a required objective of the program. The current program does not prepare participants well for promotions after the EC-05 level: few promotion interviews,<sup>9</sup> for example, and no language training.<sup>10</sup> Also, there are expectedly fewer higher EC positions even though ECCC benefits from dealing with a topic that is associated with growth in public intervention. That growth will not last forever; when it dips, it can be expected that some higher-level ECs will leave.
43. Based on the accumulated evidence, it can be concluded that the EC-PDP performs well, in a competitive environment, as a recruitment tool. As a retention strategy, however, the results are more mixed: there is a sizable group of program participants who have left ECCC before graduation and retention after graduation appears lower for participants than for non-participants.

## Structure

44. This section answers the question of optimal structure and management: If the EC-PDP is to continue, how should it be structured and managed?
45. According to the program guidelines, the EC-PDP is managed at the branch level. Directors General are responsible for approving the assessment tools, approving or denying

<sup>7</sup> Excluding a single value of 89 months.

<sup>8</sup> Periods of extended absences from normal duties, such as education leave, language training, family leave or long-term sick leave.

<sup>9</sup> AAFC's ESSSDP at all levels, Finance Canada's APAP, a possibility at PSPC's IODP and at IC's ECDP.

<sup>10</sup> NRCan's PARDP, HC's SMDP.

recommendations for promotion of Program participants, and authorizing staffing actions to promote successful participants to the next level.<sup>11</sup> They are also responsible to ensure that the Program guidelines are administered in a consistent fashion in their Directorate and, as appropriate, across their Branch.

46. Along the same lines, each branch is responsible for tracking the participants and their progress in the Program through a Branch Coordinator who ensures that processes are respected and provide updates to the Program Management Committee.<sup>12</sup>
47. The message heard from managers and staff is that the program is not really managed – “Calling it a program is a misnomer because there are basically no structures and no management”. Branch coordinators are few and far between; participants don’t know where to ask for information; many managers feel that they are left on their own to make decisions concerning PDP participants.
48. The guidelines describe a Program Management Committee (PMC) comprised of the Program Champion (Chair), one Director General from each participating Branch, and a representative from the HRB.<sup>13</sup> The role of this PMC is to oversee the overall departmental-wide management of the Program. According to interview results, the PMC was inactive for a long time and does not currently act as a governing body for the program.
49. Table 1 summarizes the governance structures used by seven other development programs. These structures do not diverge significantly from that used by the EC-PDP.
50. Delegation of the management responsibility to branches has translated into variations in program implementation that may anchor participants in a branch but are seen as counterproductive for the whole of the department. Most branches hire at the -02 level but some bring staff into the program at the -03 or -04 level (which is permitted by the guidelines). Most branches conform to the minimum 12-month between promotions expectation of the guidelines but some extend this to 18 months. Some recognize the experience acquired in other branches while others do not. According to CAPE, some stop the clock upon temporary leave while others reset it upon resuming work after a leave.
51. Delegation to branches and further day-to-day delegation to managers, coupled with limited guidelines and stated expectations, also leave the door open to inequities in treatment from one area of the department to the next, as well as from one manager to the next, as noted by CAPE.

<sup>11</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.7

<sup>12</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.8

<sup>13</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.8

**TABLE 1. Governance structure of other programs**

AAFC, ESSSDP	An ECDP DG Committee, which includes representation of all branches with ECDP population, is responsible for strategic guidance, consistent application of promotion criteria, guideline development, exceptions review, recruitment campaign oversight, review and recommendation of all ECDP promotions to program champions (ADM of Strategic Policy Branch and the ADM of Market and Industry Services Branch).
Finance Canada, APAP	The Departmental Coordinating Committee supports program development and monitoring and is referred to as the ECDP Monitoring Committee. Committee members ensure branch-specific input to the program development and support consistency among branches in the application of the program requirements, including performance ratings.
ISED, ECCDP	The management committee is chaired by a senior level executive with representation from each branch at the DG level.
NRCan, PARDP	A Steering Committee is chaired by the PARDP Champion, and serves as the central decision-making body, which is responsible for overseeing the program. It is also responsible for ensuring that program objectives and requirements reflect organizational needs. The Committee is comprised of one representative at the DG-level from each participating sector and representatives from HRWMB.
PSPC, IODP	The manager of Development Programs, reporting to a director, supervises the program.
SC, ECRD	Statistics Canada has a centre dedicated to assignments and recruitment programs; it is overseen by a program manager.
IC, ECDP	The ECDP Steering Committee has three members: one EX or senior EC (with HR management responsibility) employee from each of the Policy and Communications, and Program Operations Branches, plus a PE with expertise in staffing. It ensures consistency in administration, advises on program design, implementation and on learning and development plans to ensure support is in place. The Committee also participates in the assessment for promotions.

52. Two visions of the program find support among managers: a program managed by branches for the recruitment and retention benefits of each branch versus a program managed at the level of the department to recruit, develop, and retain the best possible staff within the department. There is tension between these two visions but, based on the interview data, we conclude that the department-wide vision garners more support than the branch-specific vision. This choice has important implications for the optimal structure and management of the program as well as for the program design parameters.

### Design parameters

53. This section explores the design parameters of the program and raises opportunities for improvement.

### Intake

54. Entry into the EC-PDP is typically at the EC-02 level but some branches prefer a higher-level intake which is permitted by program guidelines. Among seven other department programs reviewed which provided relevant equivalencies:

- two used the same rule as ECCC,<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> AAFC ESSSDP; IC ECDP.

- two also had an intake at EC-02 but skipped EC-03,<sup>15</sup>
  - another one had an intake at EC-02 but with graduation at EC-04,<sup>16</sup> and
  - two had an intake at EC-03.<sup>17</sup>
55. There is no reason to suggest that the current intake level and flexibility around it need reconsideration.
56. Related to intake is the question of considering new EC-PDP participants as part of a cohort. Some successful programs in other departments<sup>18</sup> capitalize on the concept of cohort with cohort-oriented activities, networking, support groups, group mentorship, etc. This notion has found resonance in several comments collected from staff and managers in surveys and interviews. However, grouping new EC-PDP participants into a cohort requires a level management of coordination that does not exist at this point. To implement this feature, a stronger central management of the program will have to exist, and branches will have to accept relinquishing some of their hold on program processes.
57. PSPC's IODP and SC's ECRD are designed as major external recruitment programs; other programs reviewed are not. If the program is redesigned as a departmental initiative rather than as a tool used by individual branches to address their staffing needs, recruitment into the PDP would be best positioned within a global recruitment strategy – which does not exist at this point.

### Assessment booklet

58. The assessment booklet that must be filled out to support promotion within the EC-PDP received near unanimous criticism.<sup>19</sup> It is seen as unnecessarily long, too cumbersome, too bureaucratic, and too demanding. Mentions of 40- and 50-page completed booklets were made. Some went as far as saying that it is more work to obtain a promotion within the EC-PDP than through the regular process. One manager advised their staff to avoid the EC-PDP because of the bureaucratic burden.
59. CAPE advocates revising and simplifying evaluation methods for progression through the EC levels. The assessment booklet was created before there was a Directive on Performance Management<sup>20</sup> for the whole of government. It is now necessary to do both even though or because the contents and timing of these processes do not match.<sup>21</sup>
60. The assessment booklet is currently the cornerstone of the program – in good part because there are in practice no other features in the EC-PDP. Some form of written assessment is part of all development programs reviewed for this study. Adding richness to the development component of the program could reduce the relative importance and necessary burden of the booklet by introducing formal courses, exams or interviews, for example.

<sup>15</sup> ISEDC ECCDP; DND PORP.

<sup>16</sup> SC ECRD.

<sup>17</sup> Finance Canada APAP; NRCan PARDP.

<sup>18</sup> Finance Canada' APAP, PSPC's IODP, AAFC's ESSSDP.

<sup>19</sup> Of 58 comments inventoried, four were positive.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=27146>

<sup>21</sup> Note that participants in ISEDC's ECCDP and PSPC's IODP are not subject to the Directive on Performance Management but those of Finance Canada's APAP and NRCan's PARDP are.

## Development

61. There are no provisions for development objectives or tools in the existing program guidelines other than the statement that the Manager/Supervisor is “responsible for providing development opportunities for Program participants, such as assigning tasks/projects to Program participants in line with the participant’s development needs.” A Learning and Development Plan must be developed for program participants.<sup>22</sup>
62. There is ample demonstration that PDP participants are not getting special development treatment. According to survey data, 57% of active PDP participants have an individual learning and development plan developed in conjunction with their manager. This compares to 51% among ECs outside the PDP. Participants and non-participants alike indicated that they spent on annual average two hours developing their learning and development plan. And participants and non-participants alike reported spending a median of 20 hours in the past year toward the achievement of the activities identified in their learning and development plan. The likelihood of being offered development opportunities was essentially the same for participants and non-participants: formal academic training (~10%), short professional development (~55%), rotational assignments inside the branch (~12%), rotational assignments outside the branch (~3%), micro-assignments inside the branch (~20%), micro-assignments outside the branch (~5%).
63. The EC-PDP is not a development program for most. It is a promotion program. A bolstered focus on development would be an argument for recruitment and retention and would provide ECCC – and the federal government at large – with a stronger cadre of analysts.
64. Development can occur in many ways. Table 2 lists examples from some other programs reviewed in this evaluation. In summary, here is a list of development-related activities found in various initiatives: learning and development plan, 6-month or 12-month assignment, inter-branch mobility, mentoring/coaching, mandatory training<sup>23</sup>, experience requirements<sup>24</sup>, promotion interview, network/cohort, written assessment, language training, and exams.

<sup>22</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.8

<sup>23</sup> At AAFC, they are government decision-making; policy development; analytical thinking; writing skills; oral communication; interview preparation.

<sup>24</sup> At AAFC, they are experience in the Memoranda to Cabinet or Treasury Board submissions process; experience in preparing and presenting strategic advice, recommendations or economic findings to senior management; experience participating in a meeting of one of the five departmental corporate decision-making bodies; experience participating in multidisciplinary, interdepartmental or Intradepartmental or FPT working groups; experience working with multilateral organizations; experience negotiating agreements with other government departments or organizations; experience working with external stakeholders; experience conducting consultations across branches, departments, or governments; experience leading horizontal initiatives, working groups or committees or secretariats; experience working on a departmental priority or significant corporate initiative.

**TABLE 2. Development-related activities found in other programs**

AAFC, ESSSDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance agreement and learning and development plan</li> <li>• Rotational assignments</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Six mandatory courses</li> <li>• Ten experience requirements</li> <li>• 6-month assignment in another area</li> <li>• Interviews at each level</li> <li>• ECDP network</li> </ul>
Finance Canada, APAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four six-month placements across three central agencies and one line department</li> <li>• Written assessment of employees against the merit criteria (competencies and experience)</li> </ul>
ISED, ECCDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talent management plan but there is no special assignment or training or coaching</li> </ul>
NRCan, PARDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 12-month rotational placements</li> <li>• Introduction training</li> <li>• Learning plans</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Language training</li> </ul>
PSPC, IODP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 6-month work assignments</li> <li>• Classroom training</li> <li>• Performance assessments (written assessment, interview, exam, other tools)</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Cohort</li> </ul>
DND, PORP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 12-month working assignments</li> </ul>
SC, ECRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 12-month rotational assignments</li> <li>• Mandatory formal training</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Written evaluation</li> </ul>
XFM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 to 3 6- to 12- month assignments</li> <li>• Personalized Talent Plan</li> </ul>
IC, ECDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and Development Plan</li> <li>• Presentations to the ECDP Steering Committee</li> <li>• Written exams</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Reference checks</li> </ul>

### Manager responsibility

65. Many managers feel that they are left on their own managing employees within the program: one-half of managers does not find the guidance at least “somewhat” sufficient to assist in their decisions. Few have been introduced to the objectives of the program. Fewer still attribute a development objective to the PDP. In fact, other than the assessment booklets, managers are not given clear instructions on how to best use the program. Meanwhile, line managers, because they are responsible for the day-to-day development of their staff, are key players in the PDP process.
66. Many staff who participated in the EC-PDP and who consider that the program was a success for them indicated that the proactiveness of their manager was important in their experience. Given the very open form of the program at this point, a less motivated or less dynamic

manager would indeed probably not provide a profound developmental experience to their staff.

67. Clearer expectations should be placed on managers, beyond the development of a learning and development plan – which only a bare majority of staff indicate having – and the validation of assessment booklets. The addition of mandatory development components to the program would reduce the role of the manager somewhat and dilute their overall responsibility in the success of the PDP participants.

## Promotions

68. Since the development component of the program is minor at this juncture, promotions are the key consideration for staff and a very important one for managers.
69. While program guidelines clearly indicate that twelve months is the minimum duration at each level,<sup>25</sup> official promotion data for HRB suggest that this is used as a standard as opposed to a floor. Several managers have expressed concern that participants have an expectation of being promoted every twelve months.
70. STB has implemented a rule of eighteen months before promotion. Such differences create confusion among staff and managers, and make it more difficult to manage the EC-PDP as a departmental initiative even though its stated goal is departmental in nature.
71. Other issues associated with promotion mechanisms include:
  - difficulties in fast tracking someone who has proven competency, especially in areas hiring with advanced graduate degrees;
  - slow decision processes that delay official promotion;
  - the risk of preprogrammed promotions leading to an inverted pyramid with too many EC-05s and too few supporting EC-02 to EC-04; this issue was identified at AAFC and appears to have led to the demise of similar development programs at Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) and DND; however, this is entirely in the hands of managers who can decide to create non-developmental positions at lower levels.
72. Programs from other departments and agencies reviewed here typically indicate that promotions occur after twelve months if performance warrants – similar to the EC-PDP. Some implement an 18-month period at the EC-04 level before graduation at EC-05.<sup>26</sup>
73. In our view, the expectation of 12-month stints before promotion has become a problem in this program. A clear shift in direction could be implemented by dispensing with the notion of a minimum or average or normal time-to-promotion entirely. The program would be much more clearly geared to staff development and the creation of a strong pool of policy analysts and economists if its core objective was learning, its key features were development-related, and promotions were focussed entirely on the acquisition of the competencies and experiences required by the next level. There is a risk that dispensing with the 12-month-to-promotion reference would reduce the recruitment power of the program but, as some

<sup>25</sup> EC Development Program: Q's and A's, Strategic Policy Branch, 2014.

<sup>26</sup> AAFC ESSSDP, IC ECDP.

managers indicated, ECCC may not want to attract staff who are primarily lured by quick promotions. Some might think that focussing on development would give more discretionary power to managers; proper checks and balances would have to be implemented to avoid inequities.

74. There is no fundamental reason to limit the number of promotion consideration periods within a given year. Monthly promotion processes are conceivable. This observation applies to the promotion processes, not to the promotion of individual candidates.

### **Language training**

75. Language competencies are necessary for promotion within the department beyond the EC-05 level. Some, including CAPE, have criticized the current program for not preparing staff for this requirement.
76. Since language requirements are limited up to the EC-05 level and since our assignment is focussed on progression from EC-02 to EC-05 (and, arguably, the creation of a strong pool of analysts for the department), we will not comment on this issue but leave it for others to consider. Furthermore, language training is not a typical component of other non-executive development programs.

### **Probation**

77. EC-PDP participants appointed from within the public service continue their probation period in accordance with established practice. However, for employees recruited directly from outside the public service into the EC-PDP – implicitly for a period of more than one year – the probation period is for the duration of the program. This is in accordance with the Regulation on probationary period<sup>27</sup> and the Public Service employment Act.<sup>28</sup>
78. While some staff, some managers, and CAPE considered this unfair, this is outside the control of ECCC.

### **Other streams**

79. Some branches are not using the EC-PDP but may be interested in it in the future.
80. The Office of the Chief Data Officer sees an important need for the development of data scientists. HRB noted that, as of now, the Treasury Board Secretariat recognizes only two streams within the EC classification: economists and policy analysts. This limits the ability to open the EC-PDP to data scientists as a new stream.
81. Legislative and Regulatory Affairs would consider joining the program if new parameters, such as the organization of shared cohorts, suited their needs.
82. The Canadian Wildlife Service needs to clarify its EC needs but could be tempted to use the program to build up its capacity.

<sup>27</sup> <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-2005-375/page-2.html#h-721252>

<sup>28</sup> <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-33.01/page-6.html?txthl=probation#s-61>

83. IAB may explore using the EC-PDP in the future based on the department's path forward. Historically, IAB has been reluctant to agree that twelve months is sufficient to get a one level promotion.

### Consistency

84. Anecdotal evidence suggests that program management is not entirely compliant with the existing guidelines. For example, one employee was allowed to stay in one level of a PDP position well beyond the three-year limit established in the guidelines.<sup>29</sup> Such situations illustrate the weak oversight applied by managers and the steering committee over the program.

### Equity

85. The EC-PDP raises some equity issues.
86. By and large, one-half of managers and of PDP participants consider the program to be **predictable**; one-third finds it **fair**; and one-third finds it **transparent**.
87. Some branches offer their ECs access to the EC-PDP while some others do not. Within branches, some EC positions are offered as EC-PDP while others are not. While this might be construed as an inequity from the staff's perspective, it is within managerial authority to determine which staffing and promotion mechanisms are more appropriate for the short-, medium- and long-term needs of the units. Hiring within the EC-PDP is a commitment to promote someone to the EC-05 level and, implicitly, shows that the unit needs an EC-05. Some units may have a need for lower classification position; these cannot be included in the EC-PDP.
88. Some employees and CAPE perceive that managers vary in how prone they are to award promotions. We cannot substantiate this other than anecdotally. It is possible that some managers apply promotion criteria more strictly than others. Some standardization of requirements for promotion and some mechanism to oversee managers' decisions may be warranted in a revised PDP.
89. The PDP targets ECs. According to some managers, this is because many of the requirements of an EC cannot be acquired outside of the public service. Meanwhile, in some branches, ECs work hand in hand with employees in other classifications who do not benefit from similar development programs. The latter may perceive this as an inequity. This issue is noted here but it exceeds the boundaries of our assignment.

### Administration

<sup>29</sup> Pages 3-4 of the program guidelines read: "Participants who have not obtained a promotion after 36 months at the same level may be removed from the Program. The decision to remove a participant from the Program will be made by the relevant Director General in consultation with the Program Management Committee. Efforts will be made to find the participant employment at their current level or the equivalent for which the participant is qualified."

90. This section discusses the administration of the program: Regarding administration, if the program is to continue, how should it be administered?
91. In the guidelines, the responsibility of HRB is limited to reviewing completed assessment booklets to ensure that all aspects of the Statement of Merit Criteria are assessed appropriately. An HRB representative is also supposed to “provide ongoing advice and guidance to Directors or their delegates with regards to the Program, and information regarding intake and progression.”<sup>30</sup> Feedback from various managers suggest that this function is not easily accessible.
92. Management of the program as a whole is limited to HRB maintaining an Excel spreadsheet listing participants and their promotion date. Day-to-day management of the program is weak and a global perspective on the program activities and results is unavailable.
93. Other development programs of the size and importance of the ECCC EC-PDP that are considered exemplary benefit from a permanent secretariat, as documented in Table 3. A permanent secretariat of 1 to 2 FTEs who can focus on process quality assurance, provision of support and advice to managers and staff, monitoring of activities, logistical support, etc.

**TABLE 3. Administrative structure of other programs**

AAFC, ESSSDP	A two-person team serves as the de facto secretariat.
Finance Canada, APAP	A secretariat with 1.5 FTE is housed at the Canada School of Public Service to oversee the program which is small compared to the EC-PDP.
ISED, ECCDP	A permanent secretariat runs the program.
NRCan, PARDP	The program is managed by an Executive Lead supported by Human Resources and Workplace Management Branch and a team of program alumni volunteers.
PSPC, IODP	A manager supervises the program with 6 employees.
SC, ECRD	Statistics Canada has a centre dedicated to assignments and recruitment programs. This program is overseen by a program manager (AS-03).
XFM	The program is managed through a partnership between the Policy Community Partnership Office and the Canada School of Public Service.
RPL	The program established a funded secretariat in 2019. The Public Service Commission funds 2 FTEs and O&M; the Canada School of Public Service provides administrative capacity and funds 0.5 FTE.

94. Because other PDP activities are part of normal HR management, the only quantifiable incremental cost of the PDP is the time spent at filling out booklets. In our estimate, annually, it amounts to some 2400 hours for staff (spread from EC-02 to EC-04) and 500 hours for managers. A complete cost-benefit assessment would have to factor in time/amounts saved in staffing actions which is beyond our mandate.

## Anti-racism, diversity, and inclusion

<sup>30</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.8

95. This section addresses the issues of anti-racism, equity, and inclusion: How can the program best support the Government of Canada diversity and inclusion goals as well as ECCC goals and the anti-racism, equity, and inclusion goals for the Federal Public Service?
96. No consideration is currently given to diversity and inclusion concerns in the EC-PDP. Intake does not include these as criteria and no quotas of any kind are applied. No diversity-related profile of participants and non-participants could be produced using survey data; only HRB possesses this information.
97. An analysis of systemic barriers was mentioned as necessary, as was consideration for quotas at entry. This will require a special analysis with substantial input from HRB.
98. Some 13% of current participants indicated that, in the context of the Government of Canada and ECCC diversity and inclusion goals, they encountered barriers in their progression through the EC-PDP. Stated barriers included disabilities, gender, ethnic origin, trans identification, and race. Specific comments were withheld to ensure confidentiality.
99. Managers expressed concerns on these issues as well. Several of them indicated that employment equity groups are not given special consideration in the PDP. Mentions were made that building equity goals in the PDP would mean adding selection criteria at intake, increasing support during progression, and enhancing preparation for careers post-PDP. Other managers were of the view that the same policies and processes that are in place for other hiring mechanisms already apply to the EC-PDP.

## Recommendations

100. This study concludes with the presentation of three options for the EC-PDP. The third option is recommended.
- **Option 1:** Continue operating the program as it exists on the basis that it is successful at recruitment and it represents a mechanism that is integrated in current practices.
  - **Option 2:** Make two changes to address the main irritants but essentially carry on with the current operations. The two changes would be (1) to clarify the time component of the promotion process as a minimum to dissipate the expectations that have developed around rapid successive promotions and (2) to align the requirements for promotion with the Directive on Performance Management and to synchronize them.
  - **Option 3:** Redesign the EC-PDP around the notion of professional development as described in detail below.
101. Finally, it is recommended that a systemic analysis be conducted to determine the changes required to the EC-PDP so that it supports the Government of Canada diversity and inclusion goals as well as ECCC goals and the anti-racism, equity, and inclusion goals for the Federal Public Service.
102. Furthermore, it is recommended that the ECCC Audit and Evaluation Branch plans to conduct a formative evaluation of the renewed program three years after the beginning of its implementation.

### A redesigned EC-PDP

#### Purpose

103. The EC-PDP aims to ensure the availability of competent ECs through ECCC through effective recruitment, retention, and professional development.
104. The program is designed and managed as a corporate-level program to support the success of ECCC as a whole.

#### Intake

105. Based on the collective requirements of participating branches, an EC recruitment effort is organized once a year to advertise a pool of positions, to receive applications, to select the best candidates and to then dispatch them in the branches according to identified needs. This is a competitive process that will acquire a reputation for quality and effectiveness over time which will add to the attractiveness of ECCC as an entry point for ECs.
106. EC-PDP participants from one of these annual recruitment efforts form a cohort.

107. Development, networking, and coaching activities are developed for each cohort to support personal growth and a sense of belonging.
108. Within the constraints imposed by the Treasury Board Secretariat, the development of new EC streams (e.g., data scientists, international affairs analysts) is considered by the program Steering Committee with a view to supporting ECCC's mission while ensuring that the program retains its corporate nature and does not evolve into a series of siloed specialties.

## **Development**

109. The program focuses on staff development and includes the following mechanisms:
  - a. The development of an individualized learning and development plan
  - b. One 3-month assignment in another unit at the EC-03 level
  - c. One 6-month assignment in another branch at the EC-04 level
  - d. Mandatory training and related exams
  - e. Mandatory experience requirements
  - f. Promotion interviews
  - g. Presentations to management
  - h. Portfolio development
  - i. Written assessments

## **Promotions**

110. The program graduation level is at EC-05.
111. Promotions are contingent upon the demonstration of acquisition of the knowledge and competencies required of the next level (via a specialized booklet but also using a portfolio approach), the accumulation of experiences and exposure to ECCC program diversity commensurate to each level, to be determined by the Steering Committee. To be clear, there is no reference to time-to-promotion in the revised EC-PDP.
  - Promotions to the EC-03 and EC-04 levels include a promotion interview in front of a committee of comprising the supervising manager as well as two other managers at the same level.
  - Graduation to the EC-05 level is based on a portfolio review, a live presentation and an interview in front of a committee comprising the supervising manager and two EXs including the EX supervising the supervising manager.
  - The requirements for promotion are aligned with the Directive on Performance Management and synchronized to reduce workload.<sup>31</sup>
112. Promotions are put forward by the supervising manager to a promotion sub-committee of the program Steering Committee (as opposed to the entire Steering Committee to reduce the workload) once they are satisfied that the requirements for promotion have been met.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=27146>

113. Supervising managers are required to explain to a promotion sub-committee of the program Steering Committee the lack of promotion where it has not occurred within 30 months and to present an action plan.
114. EC-PDP participants who have not been promoted within 42 months are automatically excluded from the program.

### **Governance**

115. The existing Steering Committee is maintained.
116. The Steering Committee meets at least four times a year to monitor program development and implementation, to ensure that documentation remains up to date, to ensure consistency of interpretation and application among branches, and to address emerging issues. The Steering Committee is the guardian of the corporate nature of the program.

### **Administration**

117. A permanent secretariat is created for the EC-PDP; it comprises one EC-06 manager and one EC-02 clerical staff.<sup>32</sup>
118. The secretariat is responsible for the development of detailed program parameters based on the principles outlined here, for the identification of sources of training, for the animation of cohorts, for the oversight of the program implementation to ensure that plans are created and acted upon, for the logistics of the promotion processes, and for the collection and maintenance of a database in support of program administration and evaluation (including leaves).

<sup>32</sup> The associated salary cost would not exceed \$187,000 plus the employee benefit plan.

## Appendix – Acronyms

AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-food Canada
ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
APAP	Advanced Policy Analyst Program
CAPE	Canadian Association of Professional Employees
DND	Department of National Defence
ESSSDP	Economics and Social Science Services Development Program
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECCDP	EC Career Development Program
ECDP	EC Development Program
EC-PDP	Economics and Social Science Services Professional Development Program
ECRD	EC Recruitment and Development
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
HC	Health Canada
HRB	Human Resources Branch
IAB	International Affairs Branch
IC	Infrastructure Canada
IODP	Intern Officer Development Program
ISED	Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
NRCan	Natural Resources Canada
PARDP	Policy Analyst Recruitment and Development Program
PMC	Program Management Committee
PORP	Policy Officer Recruitment Programme
PSPC	Public Services and Procurement Canada
RPL	Recruitment of Policy Leaders
SC	Statistics Canada
SPB	Strategic Policy Branch
SMDP	Science Management Development Program
STB	Science and Technology Branch
XFN	Cross-Functional Policy Mobility Program

## Appendix – The ECCC EC-PDP initiative

119. The EC-PDP at ECCC began in 2012 with the development of independent programs in the International Affairs Branch (IAB) and the Strategic Policy Branch (SPB) as a means of attracting new staff into very specific roles, as policy analysts and economists were in very high demand at that time. Many seemingly did not want to work in Gatineau.<sup>33</sup>
120. In June 2012, ECCC's Executive Management Committee agreed to extend the SPB program to all of its Branches employing EC-classified staff. With the Deficit Reduction Action Plan underway at that time, budgets did not allow for anything beyond "on-the-job" training and mentoring to be included in the EC-PDP; the program's relatively rapid promotions, where warranted, and with an expedited non-advertised appointment process, were meant to serve as the primary incentive for participants to join ECCC.<sup>34</sup>
121. Initially, the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) of the SPB provided senior leadership to the expanded program and one director, who had been involved in developing its initial program, provided administrative oversight, while employees in the Human Resources Branch (HRB) handled all of the related staffing paperwork.

### Description of the ECCC initiative

122. The EC-PDP is a three-year department-wide professional development program although participants may move through the process more rapidly or slower. It is based on progressing through three levels of classification, each typically lasting twelve months; it is open to all indeterminate EC-classified<sup>35</sup> employees working within levels<sup>36</sup> -02, -03, and -04 in positions that were identified by managers for this purpose. The purpose of the program is to take participants from the EC-02 group and support promotion through the program until graduation to an indeterminate appointment into an EC-05 position via a non-advertised selection process. The following chart summarizes the main parameters of the program implementation. The flow of program activities runs as follows:
  - a. Branches determine HR needs and make EC positions accessible to the initiative.<sup>37</sup>
  - b. Entry into the program is normally at the EC-02 level, in two streams: policy analysts and economists.<sup>38</sup> While hiring by ECCC is merit-based and competitive, intake into the

<sup>33</sup> EC Professional Development Program Highlights, July 2019. This geographical issue was not mentioned as a barrier to recruitment as part of the interviews conducted for this evaluation.

<sup>34</sup> EC Professional Development Program Highlights, July 2019

<sup>35</sup> The Economics and Social Science Services (EC) Group comprises of positions that are primarily involved in the conduct of surveys, studies and projects in the social sciences; the identification, description and organization of archival, library, museum and gallery materials; the editing of legislation or the provision of advice on legal problems in specific fields; and the application of a comprehensive knowledge of economics, sociology or statistics to the conduct of economic, socio-economic and sociological research, studies, forecasts and surveys; the research, analysis and evaluation of the economic or sociological effects of departmental or interdepartmental projects, programs and policies; the development, application, analysis and evaluation of statistical and survey methods and systems; and the development, analysis and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative information and socio-economic policies and recommendations. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/collective-agreements/job-evaluation/economics-social-science-services-job-evaluation-standard.html#3>

<sup>36</sup> In reality, most EC-PDP entries occur at the -02 level but the guidelines allow for entry at the -02, -03 or -04 levels.

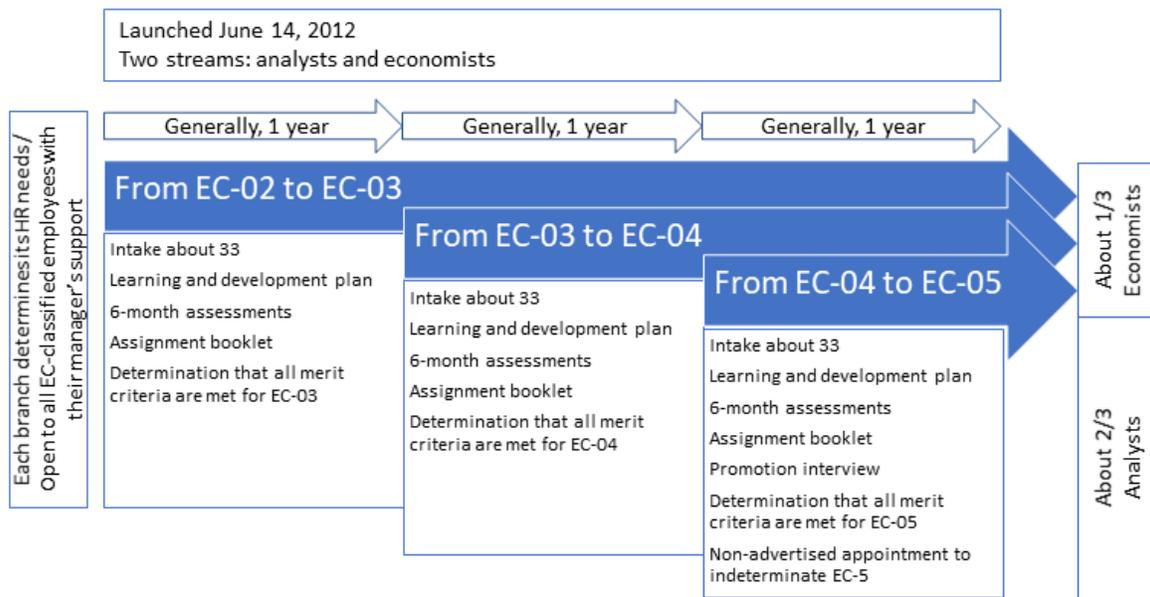
<sup>37</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.2.

<sup>38</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.3.

program may be through conversion of all or some positions within the organizational area or by staffing a vacant PDP position.<sup>39</sup>

- c. Managers and participants develop a learning and development plan meant to qualify the participant for the next level, generally within one year.<sup>40</sup>
- d. Participants are assessed by their manager every six months.<sup>41</sup>
- e. A formal assignment booklet is completed to justify promotion to the next level and support the determination that all merit criteria of the next level are met.<sup>42</sup>
- f. The promotion from EC-04 to a non-advertised indeterminate EC-05 position is contingent on a successful promotion interview with a panel of managers.<sup>43</sup>

### EXHIBIT 1 – Basic Parameters of the Initiative



<sup>39</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.2.

<sup>40</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.3.

<sup>41</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.4.

<sup>42</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.4-5.

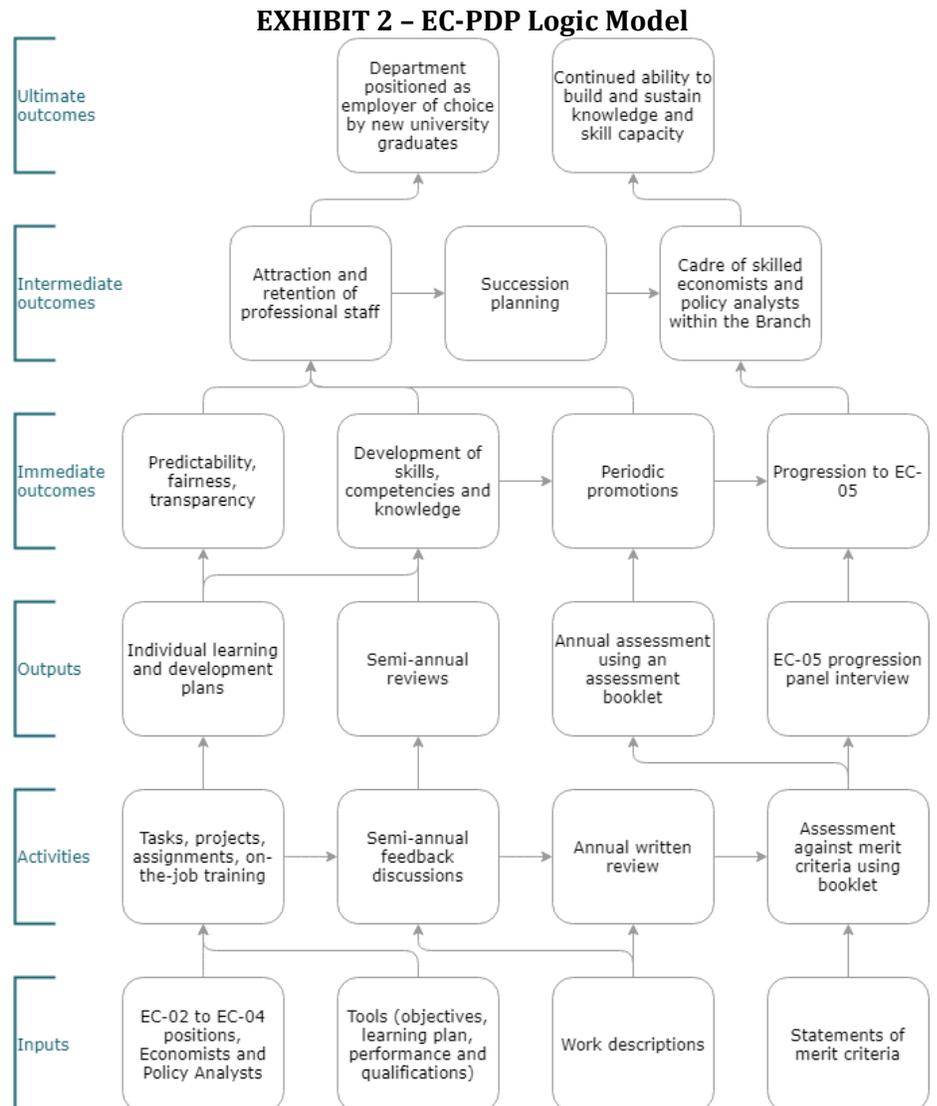
<sup>43</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.5.

## Logic of the initiative

123. A logic model best describes the theoretical logic of the EC-PDP initiative. Several aspects of this description do not conform with the reality of the current implementation of the program.

124. **Inputs.** The program is open to all EC indeterminate employees within selected branches of ECCC at the -02, -03 and -04 levels, with their hiring manager's support.<sup>44</sup> Branches interested in using the Program to develop capacity in the EC group will identify positions which will be used for career development purposes from the EC-02 up to the EC-05 level. The number of positions identified in each Branch will vary depending on resources and current and future workloads.<sup>45</sup> The program has two streams in recognition of the differences between the work of ECs who are Economists and whose jobs focus on quantitative research and analysis and those

who are Policy Analysts, with jobs focused on policy development and generating options for future government direction.<sup>46</sup>



<sup>44</sup> EC Professional Development Program Highlights, July 2019. "All current indeterminate staff in SPB at the EC-02, EC-03 and EC-04 levels will be provided with an opportunity to participate in the program. You will receive a letter of invitation asking if you wish to participate." (EC Development Program: Q's and A's, Strategic Policy Branch, 2014) "All new employees at the EC-02, EC-03 and EC-04 levels joining the Branch after April 1, 2012 will also be given the opportunity to participate in the program." (EC Development Program: Q's and A's, Strategic Policy Branch, 2014).

<sup>45</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

<sup>46</sup> EC Development Program: Q's and A's, Strategic Policy Branch, 2014.

125. The initiative also ensures access to tools to determine work objectives, establish a learning plan, assess performance and qualifications, and develop a career.<sup>47</sup> Existing work descriptions and statements of merit criteria for each EC level are also used in planning assignments and assessing achievements of objectives.
126. **Activities.** The initiative “focuses on providing participants with tasks, projects, assignments and coaching to help them move from one level to the next in the EC category.”<sup>48</sup> Formal learning activities, on-the-job training and development, special projects/assignments are organized where feasible.<sup>49</sup> Feedback discussions with Directors and assessments are expected to take place at six-month intervals<sup>50</sup> and there should be at least one annual written review<sup>51</sup> – which is also what is expected of all managers and employees. Each participant’s performance should be assessed against the Statement of Merit Criteria for each level to determine if they are suited for the next EC level; this is done using an assessment booklet.<sup>52</sup> “Generally, it is estimated that participants will take a minimum of 12 months to move from one level to the next. [...] The requirement to have one year of work experience at the current level before being considered for promotion is a minimum guideline.”<sup>53</sup>
127. **Outputs.** Tangible outputs from the initiative include individual learning and development plans, semi annual reviews, annual assessments using an assessment booklet, and EC-05 progression panel interviews.<sup>54</sup>
128. **Immediate outcomes.** The initiative is expected to produce immediate and intermediate outcomes which will feed into the grand results, the ultimate outcomes. The immediate outcomes should start with a predictable, fair and transparent process for participant advancement to the EC-05 level.<sup>55</sup> This process will support the development of the skills, competencies and knowledge of junior economists and policy analysts.<sup>56</sup> Finally, periodic promotion from EC-02 to EC-04 will lead to indeterminate appointments at the EC-05 level.<sup>57</sup>
129. **Intermediate outcomes.** Better developed staff who are periodically promoted in the EC ranks will constitute an important component of the department’s human resources strategy to attract and retain professional staff. “This Program also provides the department with a retention and succession planning strategy for employees in the EC group.”<sup>58</sup> This will support the development of a cadre of highly skilled economists and policy analysts within the department.<sup>59</sup>
130. **Ultimate outcomes.** Ultimately, the initiative will contribute to the position of the department as an employer of choice in the face of competition for Canada’s best and

<sup>47</sup> Launch announcement, June 2014.

<sup>48</sup> Launch announcement, June 2014.

<sup>49</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.4.

<sup>50</sup> Launch announcement, June 2014.

<sup>51</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.4.

<sup>52</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.4.

<sup>53</sup> EC Development Program: Q’s and A’s, Strategic Policy Branch, 2014.

<sup>54</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.3-5.

<sup>55</sup> Launch announcement, June 2014 and 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

<sup>56</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

<sup>57</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

<sup>58</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

<sup>59</sup> Launch announcement, June 2014. The program was since expanded from one branch to the entire department.

brightest people, particularly new graduates from university.<sup>60</sup> It will also support the department's continued ability to build and sustain its knowledge and skill capacity.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

<sup>61</sup> 2014 Program Guidelines, p.1.

## Appendix – Detailed evaluation questions

1. Is there still a need for this initiative? If the EC-PDP is to continue, what should its objectives be?
2. How does the EC-PDP perform as a recruitment and retention tool?
  - How many participants have entered the initiative?
  - How have they progressed from one level to another?
  - How many have completed the initiative?
  - How many of them work for ECCC/within the original branch now? What positions do participants hold now?
  - How different have career progression and trajectory been for ECCC EC staff not involved in the initiative?
  - How do participants in the EC-PDP compare to non-participants as EC-05s?
3. If the EC-PDP is to continue, how should it be structured and managed?
  - What is the initiative management oversight structure now, and who has what roles and responsibilities?
  - Is it appropriate and how can it be reinforced, or how should it be altered?
  - How are participants managed through the program and is it appropriate and how can it be reinforced?
  - How is the day-to-day administration of the program handled? Is it appropriate and how can it be reinforced?
4. If the program is to continue, are there aspects of the program that could be improved?
  - Are the initiative requirements implemented and appropriate: individual learning and development plan, semi-annual feedback discussions, promotional assessment booklet, dispute management?
  - Are there aspects of the program design that could be improved such as training and development and the sequence of program activities?
5. Regarding administration, if the program is to continue, how should it be administered?
  - Is guidance sufficient and logically related to the expected outcomes? Are there instances of use of the initiative that are inconsistent with the goals of the initiative?
  - Are the initiative's processes seen as predictable, fair, and transparent?
  - What are the costs of the initiative? Do results justify the investment?
6. How can the program best support the Government of Canada diversity and inclusion goals as well as ECCC goals and the anti-racism, equity, and inclusion goals for the Federal Public Service?<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/corporate/clerk/message-deputy-ministers-heads-separate-agencies-heads-federal-agencies.html>