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# **BC FIRST NATIONS FOREST STRATEGY**

**MAY 2019**

# Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Context	3
Engagement with First Nations	3
Reconciliation, UNDRIP and the TRC <i>Calls to Action</i>	4
First Nations Forestry Council	5
The Strategy	6
Purpose	6
The six (6) goals of the BC First Nations Forest Strategy	7
Goal 1: Shared Governance and Joint Decision-Making	9
Goal 2: A Strong Forest Economy that Supports Meaningful Sharing of Revenues with First Nations	11
Goal 3: Forest Legislation and Policy Development and Reform	13
Goal 4: Tenure Reform that Recognizes Undrip and Supports a Healthy and Strong Forest Sector	15
Goal 5: Collaborative Stewardship and Land Use Planning	17
Goal 6: Maximize First Nations Involvement in the Forest Sector	20



# Introduction

First Nations have relied on forest resources for generations. As stewards of their traditional territories, First Nations have a deep and inherent understanding of the waters, plants, animals and soils. The forest is, and has been culturally, economically and environmentally important as a source of food, shelter, tools and medicine, as well as providing materials for art and cultural and spiritual activities. First Nations recognize the significance of, and are directly experiencing, the impacts of climate change. As the original stewards, and with a knowledge that goes back generations, First Nations are key players in addressing the economic, social, and environmental challenges of managing forest lands and resources.

The revised BC First Nations Forest Strategy (the Strategy) acknowledges the cultural, ecological, economic, and social relationship between First Nations and the forests within their traditional territories. The Strategy that predates this was developed by the province in the early 2000's and focused on expanding First Nations' direct participation in the forest sector as tenure holders. The revised Strategy is a collaborative effort with First Nations that is intended to increase the participation of First Nations, advance reconciliation, support implementation of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 *Calls-to-Action* (TRC *Calls to Action*), and contribute to the revitalization of the forest sector with First Nations as full partners.

The Strategy has been developed to support modernization of the government to government relationship between the Province and First Nations. The Strategy describes a collaborative approach to forest governance and stewardship centered on the following key and overarching principles:

1. To **advance reconciliation** by recognizing First Nations as governments with an increasing role in the governance and stewardship of forest lands and resources in BC;
2. To honour and move forward on the commitments made by the Province **to fully implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls-to-Action ("TRC Calls to Action")**; and
3. To **respect and promote alignment with case law**, including the *Tsilhqot'in* Decision.

## Context

### Engagement with First Nations

The Strategy has been informed by feedback received through a series of engagement sessions with First Nations in 2015, 2017, and 2018. These engagement sessions were planned and delivered collaboratively by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD), the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) and the BC First Nations Forestry Council (FNFC). The stated purpose of the 2018 engagement sessions was to:

1. Address concerns FLNRORD heard from First Nations regarding the current First Nations Forest Strategy, and
2. Move forward by seeking input from First Nations on how to change the provincial First Nations Forest Strategy to increase First Nations participation in the forest sector, and to develop a revitalized First Nations Forest Strategy together with First Nations.



This work is part of the Province's commitment to reconciliation and the mandate of fully adopting and implementing UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action*. The commitment also includes the review and development of forest policies, programs, and legislation to support the implementation of the strategy. Regional engagement sessions with First Nations in 2018 were held over two days, with the first day focusing on key components of a revised BC First Nations Forest Strategy. Breakout session topics were discussed at each of the sessions. These topics relate directly to the Strategy and were as follows:

1. Implementation of UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action*;
2. Components of a revised BC First Nations Forest Strategy, including, but not limited to revenue sharing, tenure reform, policy and legislation review and reform;
3. Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge; and
4. A new collaborative Timber Supply Review process.

The *2018 Regional Engagement Sessions Summary Report* summarizes the dialogue at the sessions with a focus on the input received from First Nations (See Appendix A - *2018 Regional Engagement Sessions Summary Report*). Within the report is a summary of the key ideas and themes discussed with First Nations in relation to the topics that would inform a revised BC First Nations Forest Strategy.

## Reconciliation, UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action*

Both Canada and British Columbia have committed to undertaking a process of reconciliation with First Nations, that includes the commitment to implement UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action*.

In BC, the Premier's 2017 Mandate Letter to Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of FLNRORD, committed the Province to full implementation of the UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action*. Within the letter, the Premier instructed the Minister

to move forward on implementation and to review policies, programs, and legislation to determine how to bring the principles of UNDRIP into action in BC. Specifically, FLNRORD's *2018/2019 – 2020/21 Service Plan* commits the Province to work with First Nations communities and organizations, including the FNFC, to review and change at least three policies in 2018/2019 and to increase this number every year.

Acknowledging this commitment by the Province, implementation of UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action* framed both the planning for engagement sessions with First Nations in 2018, and the drafting of this Strategy. First Nations have consistently challenged the Province that implementation of UNDRIP and the TRC *Calls to Action* needs to be done in a way that is purposeful and meaningful and that leads to the systemic changes needed to strengthen government to government relationships.

UNDRIP Articles 25 – 32 provide critical guidance for the Province and First Nations to jointly implement systematic change. Specifically, Articles 26, 28, and 29 should guide implementation of this Strategy. These articles state that Indigenous peoples have the rights to the lands, territories, and resources, the right to redress or fair and equitable compensation, and the rights to the conservation and protection of their lands and territories.

### *Article 26*

1. *Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.*



2. *Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.*
3. *States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.*

#### **Article 28**

1. *Indigenous peoples have the rights to redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.*
2. *Unless otherwise freely agreed upon by the peoples concerned, compensation shall take the form of lands, territories and resources equal in quality, size and legal status of or monetary compensation or other appropriate redress.*

#### **Article 29**

1. *Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for Indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.*
2. *States shall take effective measures to ensure that no storage or disposal of hazardous materials shall take place in the lands or territories of Indigenous peoples without their free, prior and informed consent.*
3. *States shall also take effective measures to ensure, as needed, that programmes for monitoring, maintaining and restoring the health of Indigenous peoples, as developed and implemented by the peoples affected by such materials, are duly implemented.*

This Strategy is intended to support the modernization of the government to government relationship between the Province of BC and First Nations regarding the use and management of forest lands and resources, and the development of policies, programs and legislation needed to implement the principles of UNDRIP, the TRC *Calls to Action*.

## **First Nations Forestry Council**

The BC First Nations Forestry Council (FNFC) was established in 2006, initially as a response to the devastating impacts of the Mountain Pine Beetle infestation, and the desire of First Nations in BC, who came together at a meeting of BC Chiefs in 2005, to find a means of addressing the situation.

The FNFC is a non-profit society that seeks to support and advocate for the role BC First Nations should play as the original stewards and owners of forest land and resources, including access to an equitable share of the benefits derived from forestry activities within their traditional territories. The Council also supports First Nations in advancing their role as stewards of the land to protect the environmental, economic, social and cultural values of forests and lands and resources.



The Council assists First Nations in their efforts to improve and sustain the economic wealth and wellbeing of BC based on First Nations' sustainability principles that ensure the viability of the forests and lands for current and future generations. The Council supports First Nations in their work with other governments and others to ensure that First Nations' needs, values, and principles are factored into forestry-related legislation, policy, and program development.

The FNFC also provides support to First Nations in specific areas such as jobs and training to increase First Nations participation in the forest sector and connect First Nations talent to opportunities and growth in the forest sector (Workforce Strategy).

The Mission of the FNFC is as follows:

- To promote the implementation of processes to restore the land and ecosystem;
- To work with partner organizations, such as the First Nations Leadership Council and others, to increase efficiencies and benefits to First Nations communities;
- To work with governments and others to ensure that First Nations' interests, values, and principles are factored into forestry-related policy and program development, including policy and legislation reform;
- To support First Nations in forest land use planning that is holistic and reflective of their traditional and contemporary knowledge, values, and governance systems;
- To advocate on forestry matters on behalf of First Nations communities including access to an equitable share of benefits derived from the use of forest lands and resources;
- To promote forestry-related opportunities for First Nations; and
- To foster government to government and other working relationships and partnerships.

The FNFC looks forward to supporting First Nations in the implementation of the revised BC Forest Strategy that increases the role First Nations should play in the governance and stewardship of forest lands and resources. This includes advocating for needed policy, legislative, and regulatory review and reform to support the implementation of the revised Forest Strategy. The Strategy is intended to help form a renewed mandate for the FNFC.

## The Strategy

### Purpose

The purpose of the Strategy is to modernize the government to government relationship between the Province of BC and First Nations, and to support implementation of the commitments in the 2017 mandate letter to the Minister of FLNRORD and FLNRORD's 2019 *Ministry Action Plan* to do the following:

- Revitalize the First Nations Forest Strategy to reflect the province's commitment to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's *Calls to Action*;
- Increase the involvement of First Nations in all areas of the forest sector, stewardship and governance;
- Transform policies, programs, and legislation to reduce barriers to reconciliation and collaboration;



- Advance shared decision-making;
- Explore greater opportunities to promote partnerships through program level operations and government to government mandates; and
- Continue to make investments in the land base that support reconciliation.

## The six (6) goals of the BC First Nations Forest Strategy

The Strategy has been developed around the following six (6) goals:

- Goal 1:** Shared governance and joint decision-making;
- Goal 2:** A strong forest economy that supports meaningful sharing of revenues with First Nations;
- Goal 3:** Legislation and policy development and reform;
- Goal 4:** Tenure reform that recognizes UNDRIP and supports a healthy and strong forest sector;
- Goal 5:** Collaborative stewardship and land use planning; and
- Goal 6:** Maximize First Nations involvement in the forest sector.

The six goals of the Strategy were developed and refined through engagement with First Nations in 2015, 2017 and 2018, as described in the context section above. The six goals were then endorsed by FLNRORD, MIRR, and the FNFC.

Each of the goals also support the *Joint Agenda: Implementing the Commitment Document*, which was agreed to by the BC First Nations Leadership Council and the Province at their Annual BC Cabinet and First Nations Leadership Gathering in November 2018. The goals support implementation of the “*Commitment Document Concrete Actions: transforming laws, policies, processes and structures, and shared vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives*” and FLNRORD’s 2019 *Ministry Action Plan*.

### BC First Nations Leadership Council

The BC FNLC is a partnership between the BC Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs to advocate for First Nations in BC.

## Guiding principles for each goal

Each goal is informed by principles that the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council have recognized more broadly as key to the modernization of government to government relationship between the Province of BC and individual First Nations. These principles help guide the work of the Strategy in each of the 6 goal areas. The principles for each goal are summarized inside a green box.

## Identifying goal objectives

The objectives under each goal are important as they help ensure a richer understanding of the opportunities in each of the goal areas. In some instances, these objectives remain high level and in other instances they point to specific activities that should be undertaken in alignment with the goal. The variance in these objectives is reflective of the diversity of ideas shared and supported by First Nations in the goal areas.

## Implementation of the Strategy – Understanding Success

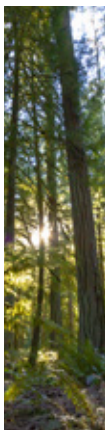
Moving forward in alignment with the Strategy, there are a number of key activities related to each goal that will provide assurance that the Province, the FNFC and BC First Nations are on the right path together.

The Strategy should be interpreted as a dynamic, living policy document. It is anticipated that other key activities will be identified. Under each goal, a short “understanding success” section is provided, highlighting key activities and measures to track implementation. This section is intended as a reporting tool to update First Nations on the efforts of the Province to work with First Nations on the implementation of the Strategy.

The six goals are interconnected, so implementation of the Strategy and understanding its success will require a sustained level of resources, and coordination of activities to best support each goal area.







## GOAL 1: SHARED GOVERNANCE AND JOINT DECISION-MAKING

Shared governance is a long-term goal that aims to reconcile Indigenous and Crown governments through changes within the existing regulatory environment to support meaningful collaboration and shared decision-making regarding the use of lands and resources. Shared governance requires changes to legislation, policies, and practices, and will take time to develop since a one size fits all approach does not recognize the legitimate cultural, governmental, and economic differences between First Nations.

Joint decision-making and shared governance both seek to advance reconciliation. These processes are predicated on the recognition of First Nation governments as legitimate government to government partners. Goal 1 in this Strategy is an affirmation by the Province that First Nation governments will be viewed in this manner.

### The following principles will guide work towards Strategy Goal 1:

- First Nation governments are legitimate governments, and the Province will relate to First Nations on a government to government basis;
- Shared governance relies on relationships that are premised on reconciliation respect and shared approaches to decision-making;
- Shared governance requires multiple streams of revenues to support and strengthen First Nations governance capacity;
- Collaboration is based on models and approaches for shared decision-making that build trust, seek consensus, and decisions that are based on the values and interests of the Province and First Nation governments;
- The best outcomes are achievable when the Province and First Nations' decisions are aligned; and
- Both the Province and First Nations will be free to appoint representatives of their choosing without interference from either party.

## Objectives

The following are the objectives related to Goal 1:

- 1.1. Recognize First Nations governments as decision makers and stewards of forest lands and resources (Article 3), grounded in the principles of UNDRIP, the TRC *Calls to Action*, and the *Tsilhqot'in* Decision.
- 1.2. Set principles for collaboration and joint decision-making regarding the use and management of forest lands and resources, through support for government to government discussions.
- 1.3. Recognize First Nations' rights to participate in decision-making processes that affect their rights and identify resources to support the development of First Nations' governance capacity.
- 1.4. Revise the Timber Supply Review (TSR) process to support collaboration and joint decision-making, incorporation of Indigenous values, and First Nations' determination of the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) for their territories, including the following:
  - Identification of best practices to support meaningful engagement of First Nations in the TSR process;



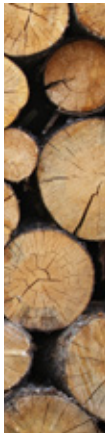
- Development of the data package to incorporate Indigenous values and management objectives;
  - Development of processes to support the establishment of technical working groups with First Nations; and
  - Collaborative determination of AAC for defined areas, in accordance with joint decision-making principles.
- 1.5. Increase the participation of First Nations at all levels of decision-making and governance in recognition of the shared and mutual interest in maintaining a strong, robust, and diverse economy..

### Understanding success – Goal 1: Shared governance and joint decision-making

If First Nations, the FNFC, and the Province are making progress together towards Goal 1, we can expect the following outcomes:

- First Nations are engaged in the process of developing forest policies, legislation, and practices that reflect Indigenous perspectives, interests and values;
- Government to government agreements provide the resources to support discussions and decisions about the management of the land base that incorporate Indigenous values, interests and perspectives, improving how forestry management and operations are undertaken, and promoting a mutually supportive climate for sustainable economic partnerships and resource development;
- Models of, and approaches to, shared decision-making are developed to facilitate meaningful collaboration regarding the management and use of forest lands and resources; and
- Sustainable resource development is informed by a better understanding of the Province and First Nations perspectives and practices.





## GOAL 2: A STRONG FOREST ECONOMY THAT SUPPORTS MEANINGFUL SHARING OF REVENUES WITH FIRST NATIONS

The Province and First Nations understand that reconciliation requires a new fiscal relationship to support the operation of First Nations governments and share benefits derived from forests, land, and resources.

The current revenue sharing model and program was developed by the Province. The Province recognizes that First Nations are seeking changes to the model to provide an increased share of the benefits derived from the use of forest lands and resources, and that forestry revenue sharing needs be to be addressed in this Strategy. The Province is committed to developing a new fiscal relationship that supports economic reconciliation, the operation of First Nations governments, and increases access to the economic benefits derived from forest lands and resources within their traditional territories.

All governments require multi-streams of revenues to support their governance capacity. To support this, the Province, the FNFC, and First Nations recognize that First Nations must share in the benefits derived from the use of forest lands and resources and be full partners in the economic development and growth of British Columbia.

The forestry economy has a role to play in closing the socio-economic gap, supporting and strengthening First Nations in the evolution of their governance, and in the rebuilding of strong, healthy, Indigenous communities.

A modernized government to government relationship requires new approaches and models for revenue sharing. New approaches can take many forms that recognize First Nations as key players and drivers in the economic landscape and revitalization of the forest sector in the Province.

Modifying the revenue sharing framework is meant to support the ability of First Nation governments to more fully benefit from the use of forest lands and resources, and to develop the capacity needed to increase their role in the governance and stewardship of forest lands and resources. Meaningful participation of First Nations will assist in the development of a strong economy, and in closing the socio-economic gap.

To support a new fiscal relationship and advance economic reconciliation with First Nations, models and approaches will be developed with the input of First Nations to significantly increase access to forestry royalties and revenues starting in 2020.

### The following principles will guide work towards Strategy Goal 2:

- First Nations should share in the economic benefits from forest lands and resources derived from their traditional territories;
- Revenue sharing supports First Nation governance capacity, and a modernized government to government relationship;
- Sharing is an important recognition of the Provinces' efforts to pursue a renewed fiscal relationship to support meaningful reconciliation, the implementation of UNDRIP, and meet its legal obligations;
- The Province and First Nations both benefit from a thriving sustainable forestry sector and recognize the key role First Nations play in the economic landscape.



## Objectives

The following are the objectives related to Goal 2:

- 2.1. Advance a new fiscal relationship; that supports meaningful revenue sharing from the use of forest lands and resources.
- 2.2. Support governance capacity and share the economic benefits from resources derived off First Nations territories.
- 2.3. Advance economic reconciliation through the development of revenue sharing models and approaches to support the implementation of UNDRIP, the TRC Calls to Action, and recent case law.
- 2.4. Develop a revenue sharing model and process that shares forest revenues and royalties with First Nations that meaningfully shares the benefits derived from the use of forest lands and resources and contributes to the development of a more equitable and inclusive society by closing socio- economic gaps.

## Understanding success – Goal 2: A strong forest economy that supports meaningful sharing of revenues with First Nations

If First Nations, the FNFC, and the Province are making progress together towards Goal 2, we can expect the following outcomes:

- The revenue sharing model is modified to a fair distribution of forest revenues with First Nations starting in 2020 and increasing significantly over the next five years.





## GOAL 3: FOREST LEGISLATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REFORM

As noted under the description of Goal 1, shared governance is a long-term goal that aims to reconcile the interests of Indigenous and Crown governments and requires changes to the existing regulatory framework to support shared decision-making and government to government relationships. This requires a joint review and reform of legislation, policies, regulations, and practices to increase the role First Nations play in the governance and stewardship of forest lands and resources.

Since 2003, legislative amendments have created some opportunities to increase First Nations participation in the forest sector. However, barriers to reconciliation and shared decision-making persist, and there is a need to include First Nations values, interests, and management objectives in forest policies, legislation, and practices to facilitate government to government relationships. A renewed and modernized government to government relationship will need to reflect legislation and policy development to include the identification of barriers and incorporation of both Indigenous and Crown world views, interests, values, and processes in the governance of forest lands and resources and environmental stewardship.

The implementation of UNDRIP and TRC *Calls to Action* will require a review of current legislation, policies, and regulations with regards to forest governance and stewardship. The Province has committed to working with the FNFC and involving First Nations in the development of forest policy, including legislative and regulatory reviews to better incorporate First Nations interests and values, and to revitalize the forest sector in BC. This includes the development of policy changes that will result in greater benefits to First Nations, communities, workers, and industry.

To collaborate on changes to policies and the legislative framework, the Province and First Nations will need to jointly develop a process for the review which includes the resources needed to support informed and meaningful engagement.

### The following principles will guide work towards Strategy Goal 3:

- The shared vision for Crown-First Nations reconciliation includes meaningful changes to legislation and policy;
- First Nations have unique interests in the governance and stewardship of natural resources in their territories;
- Change to forest legislation and policies requires meaningful engagement with First Nations; and
- Indigenous self-government, and perspectives need to be incorporated into all aspects of the Crown- Indigenous relationship.

## Objectives

The following are the objectives related to Goal 3:

- 3.1. Policy and legislation to support the Implementation of UNDRIP both by incorporating First Nations' interests, values and priorities into forest governance and stewardship, and supporting government to government discussions that include joint decision-making regarding the use and management of forest lands and resources.



- 3.2. Conduct a review of forestry policies, programs, regulations, and legislation by establishing policy and legislation technical working groups to identify legislative, and regulatory barriers to reconciliation, and provide recommendations on changes to support shared decision-making, recognize First Nations governments, and reflect First Nations interests, values, and priorities in the management and use of forests land and resources.
- 3.3. Engage First Nations meaningfully in the development of legislation, regulations and policies, including changes to *The Forest Act* and *Forest and Range Practices Act*, and regulations to support a revitalized forest sector.

### Understanding success – Goal 3: Legislation and policy development and reform

If First Nations, the FNFC, and the Province are making progress together towards Goal 3, we can expect the following outcomes:

- A review of forestry policies, programs, regulation, and legislation has been undertaken through a policy and legislation technical working group to identify barriers to reconciliation;
- Recommendations on program, policy, regulation, and legislation changes to recognize First Nations governments and reflect First Nations interests, values, and priorities in the management of forests land and resources have been developed;
- Changes to forest policies, legislation, and regulations completed through meaningful engagement with First Nations that reflect First Nations priorities and interests and to support shared decision-making regarding forestry related administrative and operational decisions;
- Changes to the *Forest Act* and regulations to support shared decision-making regarding AAC for example, and increase access to tenure; and
- Changes to FRPA and associated regulations to incorporate First Nations values and management objectives in the management and use of forest land and resources.





## GOAL 4: TENURE REFORM THAT RECOGNIZES UNDRIP AND SUPPORTS A HEALTHY AND STRONG FOREST SECTOR

All British Columbians benefit from a strong forest sector. First Nations play an important role in revitalizing the forest sector. Meaningful First Nations participation is an important component to our collective success. The 2009 Roundtable on Forestry recognized the need to have First Nations as full partners in building and maintaining a strong forest sector and economy.

Since the early 2000's, the Province has worked to increase First Nations participation in the forest sector through several initiatives. A key focus for increasing participation was access to tenure opportunities. In 2003, the *Forest Act* was amended to allow for the direct award of forest tenures to First Nations. This has supported the development of many First Nations owned forestry businesses and enabled First Nations to participate directly in the forest economy as tenure holders. A volume take-back from major licensees allowed some of the take-back volume to be redirected to First Nations.

Access to more viable tenure is needed in many cases to level the playing field. The economies of scale in favour of major licensees and the need to free up additional volume to allocate to First Nations to level the playing field were consistent messages brought forward at regional engagement sessions with First Nations. First Nations support access to increased volume to expand their involvement in the forest sector and their involvement as managers and decision-makers regarding the use of forest lands and resource in their territories.

Supporting First Nations to become full partners in the forest sector will require increased access to tenure and an evaluation of the current tenure allocation, apportionment legislation, and policies to identify ways to increase First Nations access to tenure. There are some examples of how to increase the role First Nations play in the use and management of forest lands and resources. This evaluation will include the review of policy and legislation to identify barriers that are systemic obstacles to reconciliation.

### Objectives

The following is the key objective related to Goal 4:

- 4.1. Jointly reexamine the current values underpinning the tenure system and assist First Nations in becoming full partners in the forest sector through changes to the tenure system.
- 4.2. Create opportunities to increase the viability of existing First Nation tenures;
- 4.3. Improve opportunities for First Nation to enter into business to business partnerships with other forest tenure holders.
- 4.4. Create opportunities for First Nations to increase their access to forest and range tenures.

### The following principles will guide work towards Strategy Goal 4:

- Increase tenure opportunities for First Nations to support efforts to empower First Nations as full partners in the forest sector;
- Legislative and policy changes that result in benefits to First Nations that will help revitalize the forest sector and strengthen the rural economy;
- A collaborative approach to resolving barriers to reconciliation is the best way for the Province and First Nations to develop opportunities in the forest sector; and
- Closing the socio-economic gap between First Nations and British Columbians is a shared objective and priority.





## Understanding success – Goal 4: Tenure reform that recognizes UNDRIP and supports a healthy and strong forest sector

If First Nations, the FNFC, and the Province are making progress together towards Goal 4, we can expect the following outcomes:

- Increase in First Nations involved in or entering into business to business partnerships with other forest tenure holders;
- Changes in forest policy, legislation and regulations to increase access to markets and the viability of First Nations tenures/licenses;
- Increase in the volume/tenure and licenses held by First Nations to increase their participation in the forest sector; and
- Increase in the involvement of First Nations in the management and use of forest resources within their traditional territories.







## GOAL 5: COLLABORATIVE STEWARDSHIP AND LAND USE PLANNING

The Province and First Nations are working toward a renewed and modernized relationship based on strong government to government relationships that require shared decision-making and inclusion of Indigenous perspectives, interests, and values.

There is a shared interest in environmentally sustainable resource development that is informed by science and Indigenous Knowledge. The best outcomes are achievable when the Province and First Nations decisions are aligned through collaboration. First Nations and the Province share a responsibility for stewarding the natural environment over the long-term. Both parties have acknowledged that collaboration will be key to develop approaches and strategies to achieve this end.

Meaningful collaborative stewardship will take different forms in different parts of the province as both the environmental condition, and the priorities of First Nations and the Province will shape the work that will be done.

First Nations have stressed the need for their own land use plans for their territories that identify their values, stewardship and management objectives to be operationalized and/or formalized to advance their interests in administrative and operational decisions.

Processes will need to bridge the worldviews and perspectives of both governments by working together to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into the process of gathering information, identifying values, setting resource management objectives, and planning the use of the forest land base in First Nations territories. The development of new models and approaches to shared decision-making with First Nations will be necessary.

### The following principles will guide work towards Strategy Goal 5:

- First Nation governments are legitimate governments, and the Province will relate to First Nations on a government to government basis;
- Land use planning needs to be pursued as a partnership between First Nations and the Province based on co-management and shared decision-making;
- Land use planning is a tool that can be used to establish shared visions and objectives and operationalize the principles of UNDRIP.
- Land use plans can help to ensure that First Nations values and management objectives are incorporated into the management for lands and resources in their territories in accordance with provincial and Indigenous perspectives and incorporating Indigenous knowledge.
- Collaborative stewardship will be based on new models for shared decision-making developed by the Province and First Nations;
- First Nations land use/territory plans are recognized by the Crown;
- Indigenous knowledge must be respected and recognized; and
- The Province must ensure the protection and recognition of the ownership, confidentiality and integrity of Indigenous knowledge and the holders of that knowledge.

The Province recognizes the critical role that First Nations have in modernizing land use planning and has committed to working with First Nations to develop approaches for land use planning process as government to government partnerships. It is acknowledged that First Nations require the resources to participate in an informed and meaningful manner in this process.

The shared goal is to ensure that lands and resources are managed in accordance with provincial and Indigenous knowledge and values to support sustainable resource development that manages ecosystems for present and future generations. First Nations land use plans provide the opportunity to establish shared values and objectives for the use of land and resources into the future. While recognizing land use planning goes beyond the forestry sector, the goals of this strategy is to promote forest management and practices to sustain healthy ecosystems.

## Objectives

The following are the objectives related to Goal 5:

- 5.1. Restore environmental values where needed and ensure that forestry planning sustains healthy ecosystems.
- 5.2. Utilize Indigenous knowledge (where supported by the First Nation) in planning and stewardship processes, while ensuring the protection and recognition of the ownership, confidentiality and integrity of Indigenous Knowledge and the knowledge holders.
- 5.3. Pursue collaborative land use planning and stewardship processes as partnerships between First Nations and the Province to establish management objectives and priorities for their territories.
- 5.4. Secure resources for First Nations to develop land use plans.
- 5.5. Ensure recognition of First Nations' land use plans by the Province.
- 5.6. Jointly commit to approaches to stewardship of forest lands and resources that reflect Indigenous ways and values.
- 5.7. Establish a common vision and goals, jointly set principles, and develop models for collaboration and shared decision-making between the Province and First Nations. (e.g. values of importance such as water, wildlife, plant fauna and cultural values.

## Understanding success– Goal 5: Collaborative stewardship and land use planning

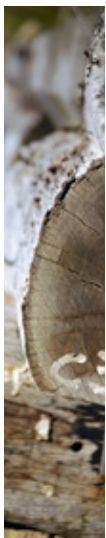
If First Nations, the FNFC, and the Province are making progress together towards Goal 5, we can expect the following outcomes:

- Policies and practices have been developed that respect, recognize, and protect Indigenous Knowledge
  - » Indigenous Knowledge is being used in a culturally respectful manner in provincial decisions surrounding land-use planning and stewardship monitoring;
- First Nations have access to the resources needed to participate in the development of land use plans for their territories that reflect their management objectives and priorities;
- New models are developed to incorporate First Nations land use plans into strategic land use planning based on collaboration and shared decision-making;



- Collaborative processes have been developed through a government to government process for shared decision-making regarding the management objectives and outcomes for key values, collaborative management, joint monitoring, and reporting;
- Policies are developed to recognize First Nations land use/territory plans;
- Development of common approaches to stewardship of forest lands and resources that reflect Indigenous ways and values;
- First Nations are involved in forest stewardship through incorporation of their stewardships and management objectives in operational and strategic decisions and processes, and involved in guardianship and other monitoring programs; and
- First Nation values and priorities are reflected in the forest planning, operational and administrative decisions and processes including the TSR process and AAC determinations.





## GOAL 6: MAXIMIZE FIRST NATIONS INVOLVEMENT IN THE FOREST SECTOR

All British Columbians benefit from a strong forest sector. First Nations can play an important role in revitalizing the forest sector. The 2009 Roundtable on Forestry recognized that for a vibrant and sustainable forest industry, First Nations should be full partners in economic development and its growth. Closing the socio-economic gap and increasing the participation of First Nations in the forest sector is a shared objective and priority in achieving a strong and diverse forest sector.

British Columbia's forest sector is an important contributor to the province's economy. A robust forest sector requires strong and meaningful collaboration between First Nations, industry and the Province in all areas of forestry including operations and decision-making. To maximize First Nations participation in the forest sector there is a need for greater support for First Nations to increase their participation through the development of forestry businesses and partnership opportunities. There is also a need for further support for training and employment opportunities in collaboration with industry and the Province to achieve sustainable and meaningful career, employment, and business outcomes for First Nations.

### The following principles will guide work towards Strategy Goal 6:

- First Nations are key players in the forest sector with access to tenure and other economic opportunities in the forest sector;
- Development of new models for economic relations that support business opportunities and partnership for First Nations to become full participants in the forest sector is required;
- Meaningful participation of First Nations in the forest economy will facilitate a climate for sustainable economic partnerships and resource development; and
- A strong and resilient economy is a shared interest.

### Objectives

The following are the objectives related to Goal 6:

- 6.1. Revitalize the forest sector with the full participation of First Nations.
- 6.2. Update the Strategic Forestry Initiative to better support First Nations to develop forestry businesses, business-to-business and partnership opportunities.
- 6.3. Provide continued support for the First Nations Forestry Training Program.
- 6.4. Support implementation of the BC First Nations Forestry Work Force Strategy.



### **Strategic Forestry Initiative (SFI)**

SFI was developed internally by the Province in the fall of 2015 as a short-term initiative to:

- Respond to key recommendations heard at the May 2015 Regional First Nation Engagement Workshops
- Move toward First Nations being full partners in the forest sector;
- Support business-to-business agreements with Industry;
- Increase First Nations access to tenure; and
- Increase stability and continuity of forest resource development on the land base.

### **First Nations Forestry Training Program**

The First Nations Forestry Training Program (FNFTP) is the training component of the Workforce Initiative. It is designed to match students with sponsoring companies and provide individually structured training that reflects the operations of their sponsoring company. The result is both employment with the company and recognized or accredited education for the student, all of which will help fill the labour needs within the industry.

### **BC First Nations Forestry Work Force Initiative**

With a foundation of success built through the FNFTP, the FNFC continues to recognize the need to build First Nations community capacity that matches growing needs for skilled labour within the forest industry. The Work Force Initiative is to match emerging labour market needs within regions across BC, strengthening the opportunities for capacity building within First Nations.

## **Understanding success– Goal 6: Maximize First Nations involvement in the forest sector**

If First Nations, the FNFC and the Province are making progress together towards Goal 6, we can expect the following outcomes:

- The First Nations Forestry Training Program continues to grow and is fully funded by provincial government;
- Access to tenure, partnerships, and business opportunities between First Nations and industry have increased;
- Indigenous Peoples represent a greater percentage of the forest sector workforce;
- Engagement with First Nations communities has led to improvements in the ability of the Strategic Forestry Initiative to support increased First Nations participation in the forest sector;
- Continued support to facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Goals, Short and Long-term Outcomes in The BC First Nations Workforce Strategy;
- First Nations have increased access to tenure and are full partners in the forest sector (see also Goal 4); and
- Resources are provided to Nations to develop infrastructure and capacity to facilitate their participation in the forest sector.



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