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# SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING PILOT

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document provides information on Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs). It does not constitute legal advice, nor does it provide legal interpretation. Where inconsistent with legal or regulatory requirements, those requirements prevail.

# SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. WHAT IS FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING?

Forest Landscape Planning (FLP) is a new process for improved forest management designed to foster greater collaboration between First Nations and the province to address high priority forest resource values such as ecosystem health. The Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) framework was enacted by the [Forest Statutes Amendment Act, 2021 \(Bill 23\)](#), to help translate high-level strategic land use planning direction to specific forest management areas and operations on the ground.

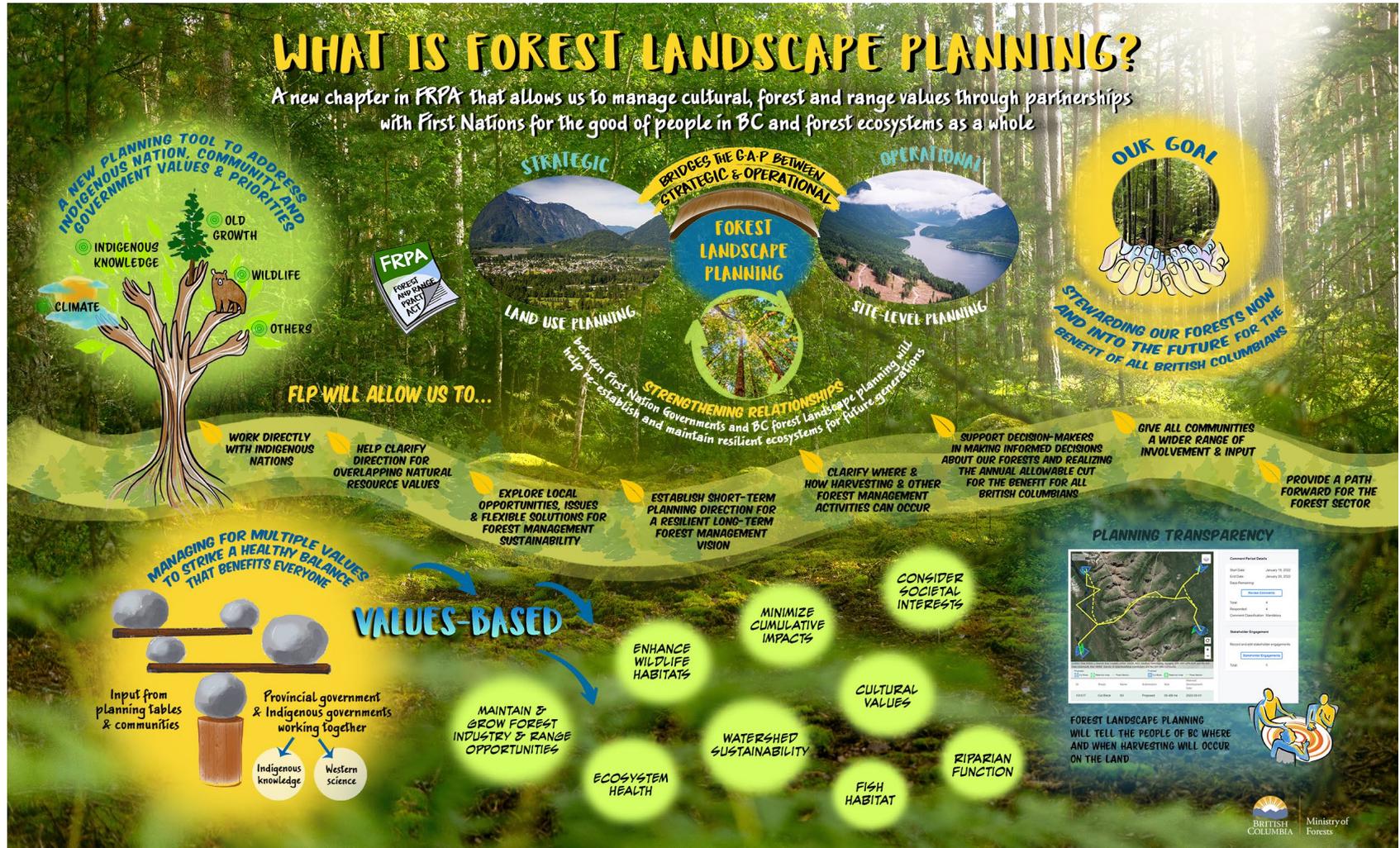
Development of an FLP is based on the following principles:

- **Implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act)** – FLP is a measure to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples including achieving the consent of Indigenous governing bodies through the collaborative development by First Nations and the province of the plan based upon best available knowledge.
- **Collaboration** – new opportunities for collaboration between Indigenous governing bodies and the province, with consideration of input from licensees, the public and other stakeholders. The FLP sets objectives over a specific area (e.g., Sunshine Coast TSA) to maintain priority forest resource values in one clear plan, rather than many plans for multiple licensees.
- **Best available knowledge** – FLP advances the use of Indigenous Knowledge, leading-edge science, local community values, and evidence-based policy development through long-term, holistic, and respectful management of lands and waters.
- **Clear direction to licensees** – FLP provides objectives for specific forest resource values for specific portions of the land base, which provides direction for licensees in the development of operational plans.
- **Tools and approaches** – FLP provides and describes improved management practices based upon the latest science available for the purpose of balancing the forest resource values. For example, where social objectives and latest science indicates thresholds for old growth are below the minimum, the FLP will describe the desired state of the value and landscape level approach for returning to the desired state over the long-term, such as old growth recruitment.

- **Monitoring and reporting** – FLP specifies clear and measurable indicators for verifying achievement of outcomes for the broader objectives to guide long-term forest management. The FLP includes a detailed monitoring program to track and report, every 5 years, on the state of priority forest resource values in relation to the objectives.
- **Adaptation** – through monitoring and reporting, FLP provides a framework that allows for continuous and long-term re-examination and management adjustments to be made to address current and future risks on forest resource values. Plans may be amended to address emerging issues before these issues potentially become more significant problems.
- **Efficiency** – FLP creates a consolidated and coordinated approach based upon consensus for sound science, which is expected to create efficiencies in engagement with Indigenous Nations through effective monitoring and reporting of the indicators used to state the condition of the priority forest resource values.

**Figure 1 Forest Landscape Planning** shows the goals and values that are considered during the Forest Landscape Planning process and those that are reflected in a FLP.

Figure 1 Forest Landscape Planning



## 2. WHO IS INVOLVED IN FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING?

Forest Landscape Planning is collaboratively led by Indigenous governing bodies and the provincial government. Forest licence holders will be engaged to help develop the practical application of operational activities to meet the objectives developed for forest resource values. Engagement with the public, various stakeholder groups and communities will help inform in a similar manner to forest licence holders, but on different forest resource values.

## 3. HOW ARE INDIGENOUS GOVERNING BODIES INVOLVED IN FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING?

Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) must reflect the right of self-government and self-determination of Indigenous peoples. To that end FLPs are developed collaboratively with Indigenous peoples whose rights and interests may be affected.

Indigenous governing bodies are involved as a partner with the province and are part of the 'Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) Planning team' consisting of key ministry staff and Indigenous Nation representatives.

The FLP planning team is established in the first phase of the FLP process.

The five core Indigenous Nations participating in the Sunshine Coast FLP are:

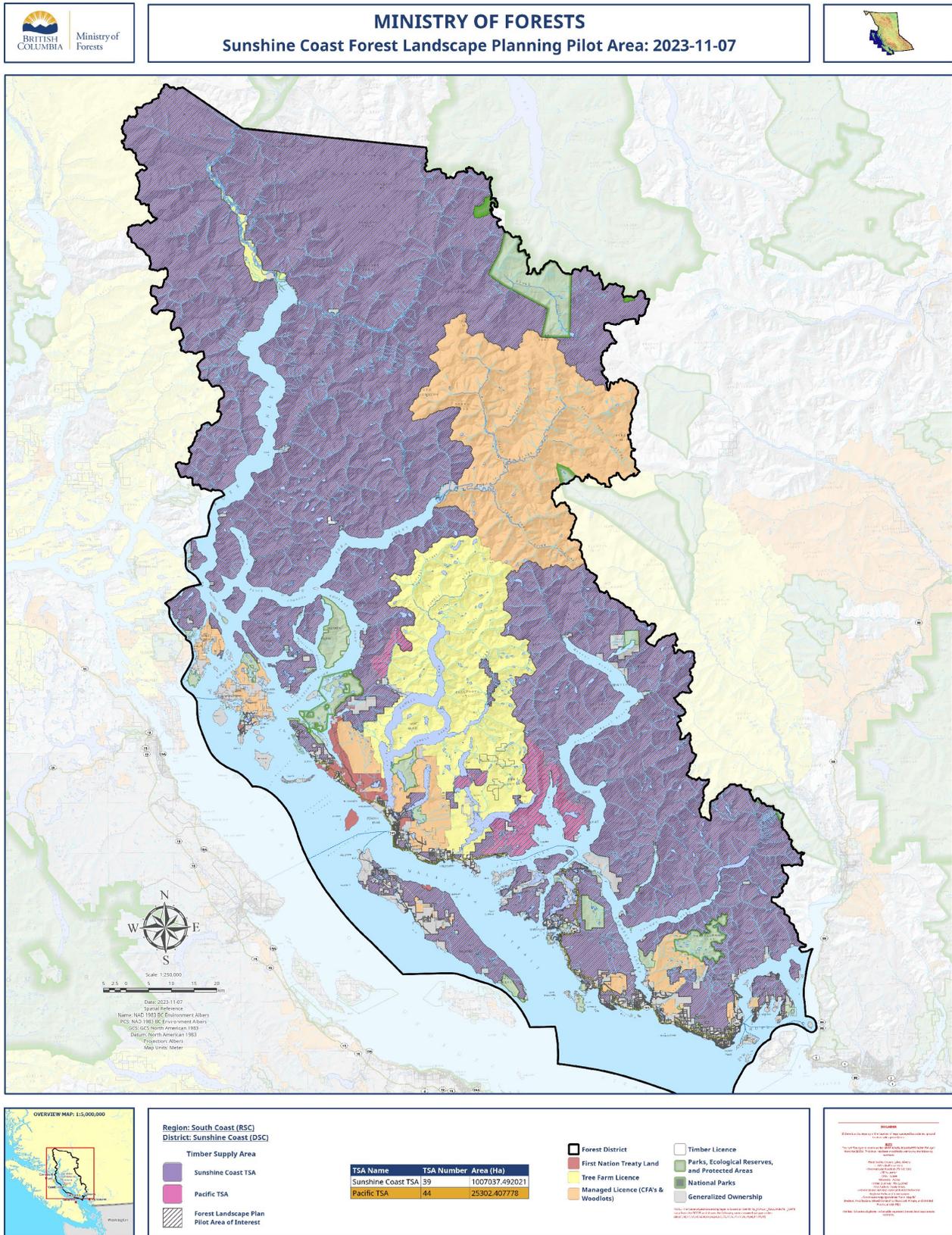
- Homalco First Nation;
- Klahoose First Nation;
- shíshálh Nation;
- Squamish Nation; and
- Tla'amin First Nation.

For more information follow this link to *Working in Collaboration and Cooperation with Indigenous Communities*: [Forest Landscape Plans - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/land/indigenous/forest-landscape-plans).

## 4. WHAT AREA DOES THE SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLAN COVER?

The Sunshine Coast Forest Landscape Plan covers over 1.7 million hectares encompassing the Sunshine Coast Timber Supply Area (TSA) and Blocks 21, 22, and 23 of the Pacific TSA (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Sunshine Coast Forest Landscape Planning Pilot Project Area



## 5. WHAT VALUES ARE INFORMING THE SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING PROCESS?

The Sunshine Coast FLP will develop objectives for the long-term, holistic, and respectful management of forest resource values, including:

- Ecosystem health;
- Water & watersheds;
- Fish;
- Biodiversity;
- Wildlife;
- Culture;
- Equitable sustainable economy;
- Cumulative impacts; and
- Climate change.

The BC Old Growth Strategic Review identifies ecosystem health as a priority. Therefore, ecosystem health and integrity will be driving forces of the Sunshine Coast FLP Pilot.

**Figure 3 Vision for the Future** illustrates FLP's vision for the future of forest management approach that focuses on maintaining key forest values.

Figure 3 Vision for the Future



## 6. HOW DOES THE SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING PROCESS RELATE TO OTHER PLANNING PROCESSES?

Forest Landscape Planning is intended to bridge the gap between Strategic Land Use Planning at a regional scale and Operational/Site-Level Planning at a more local scale. Where Strategic Land Use Plans are not yet developed, the Forest Landscape Plan may act to achieve broader landscape management outcomes.

**Figure 4 Forest Landscape Planning and Tactical Level Planning** demonstrates one example of how Forest Landscape Plans relate to the broader planning framework. This figure is adapted from Boyland, M. 2003. *Hierarchical Planning in Forestry*.

Figure 4 Forest Landscape Planning and Tactical Level Planning

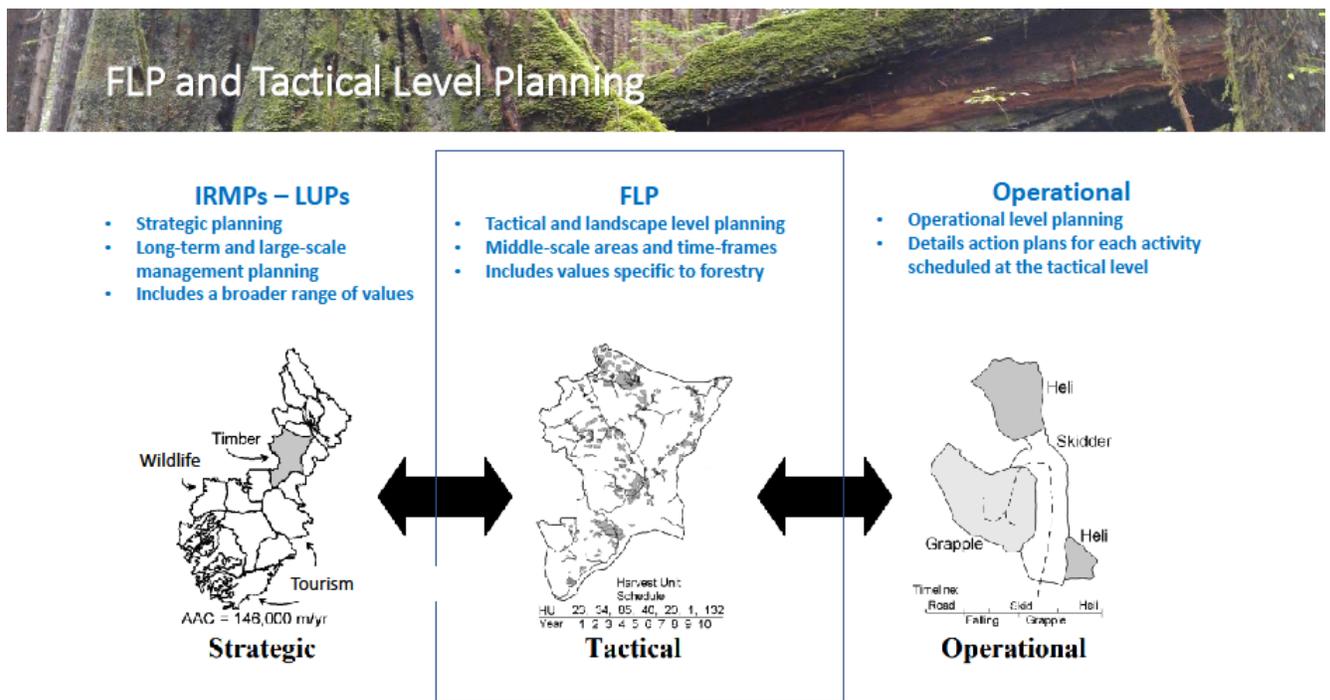


Figure from Boyland, M. 2003. *Hierarchical Planning in Forestry*.

At the time of this Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) Pilot planning stage, there is not a Sunshine Coast District-wide Modernized Strategic Land Use Plan (LUP). In its absence, Nation-led strategic planning processes are guiding the Sunshine Coast FLP Pilot with a focus on defining objectives to achieve ecosystem-based management, providing direction for natural resource stewardship, and the management of a broad suite of forest resource values.

## 7. WHY ARE FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS IMPORTANT?

### **Implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act)**

– FLP is a measure to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights Indigenous Peoples including achieving the consent of Indigenous governing bodies through the collaborative development by First Nations and the province of the plan based upon best available knowledge.

Planning under the new FLP framework will be at the landscape level and will enable Indigenous governing bodies to work in collaboration with the province, engage with forest licensees and local communities to inform the practical application of objectives for forest resource values, and provide opportunities to engage with stakeholders and the public to enhance awareness of the FLP framework.

Currently forest resource management is guided by outdated higher-level plans and aspatial landscape level direction, often developed with no First Nation input, and Forest Stewardship Plans that interpret those higher-level plans. First Nations and the province have found that Forest Stewardship Plans (FSPs) have proven to be less effective at responding to current resource management issues at a landscape level (i.e., Sunshine Coast Timber Supply Area). For example, the higher-level plans and FSPs did not effectively address multiple overlapping values, coordination of multiple forestry operators, cumulative effects, or engagement with Indigenous Nations, stakeholders, and the public. FSPs were not effective because they were not developed in collaboration with First Nations and lacked transparency for other stakeholders and the public. The new Forest Landscape Planning framework is designed to address these challenges.

New spatial plans will be developed by industry that will replace FSPs, and these plans must be consistent with the FLP.

**Figure 5 Forest Landscape Planning and Other Planning Processes** shows how Forest Landscape Planning framework addresses a broader set of forest management values and objectives, fosters partnerships with Indigenous Nations, and encourages meaningful involvement of communities and the public that are currently missing in the Forest Stewardship Plan framework.

Figure 5 Forest Landscape Planning and Other Planning Processes

## Managing Forestry Activities on Provincial Public Land in British Columbia

Strategic Land Use Planning, Forest Landscape Planning and Operational/Site-level Planning are used together to direct forestry activities and guide stewardship of B.C.'s public land and resources.

Each type of planning has a valuable and complementary role in managing forestry activities to advance reconciliation, strengthen the economy, address climate change and enhance sustainability.

Forest Landscape Planning is being introduced to help translate high-level strategic land use planning direction to specific forest management areas and bridge the gap between Strategic Land Use Planning and Operational/Site-level Planning.

Strategic Land Use Planning	NEW Forest Landscape Planning	Operational/Site-level Planning
<p>Sets legal direction under a cabinet approved land use plan</p> 	<p>Sets direction under the <i>Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA)</i> Must be consistent with an approved Strategic Land Use Plan</p> 	<p>Must follow an established Forest Landscape Plan or propose variances to the plan for government approval</p> 
<p><b>Strategic Scale</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is conducted in partnership with Indigenous governments</li> <li>Engages local governments, stakeholders and the public in the planning process</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tactical Scale</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is conducted in partnership with Indigenous peoples and in collaboration with forest and range licence holders under <i>FRPA</i></li> <li>Enables deeper engagement &amp; greater transparency with local governments and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<p><b>Operational Scale</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotes cooperation with forest and range licence holders</li> <li>Provides the opportunity for all stakeholders and the public to comment on road and cutblock locations</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sets objectives and direction for natural resource stewardship and management across the natural resource sector</b></li> <li><b>Establishes the foundation for healthy, transparent and collaborative natural resource management</b></li> <li><b>Balances economic, social and environmental interests</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Aligns broad forest management direction from one or more Strategic Land Use Plans that overlap the Forest Landscape Plan area</b></li> <li><b>Applies that direction to specific forest management areas (e.g. timber supply areas, tree-farm licences &amp; large, area-based forest tenures)</b></li> <li><b>Directs where and how forestry activities can occur</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ensures operational forestry activities are consistent with Strategic Land Use Plans and Forest Landscape Plans</b></li> <li><b>Defines where roads and cutblocks will be located consistent with Strategic and Forest Landscape Plans</b></li> </ul>
KEY OUTCOMES:	KEY OUTCOMES:	KEY OUTCOMES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defines the location and nature of resource stewardship and management activities (through zoning)</li> <li>Outlines baseline conditions and sets monitoring requirements to help safeguard B.C.'s land and natural resources</li> <li>Considers the cumulative effects of natural and human-caused disturbances</li> <li>Evaluates and prepares for the socio-economic and environmental effects of climate change on land and resource use</li> <li>Develops future resource use scenarios, establishes objectives, and provides guidance to achieve desired future states</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies where &amp; how forest management activities can occur (i.e. timber harvesting, road layout, silviculture activities)</li> <li>Provides clarity on overlapping direction from strategic plans and land use objectives such as Wildfire Risk Reduction Plans and Access Management Plans</li> <li>Addresses changing conditions in a timely manner (e.g. climate change, wildfires)</li> <li>Addresses potential environmental impacts from timber harvesting activities</li> <li>Uses scenario modelling and considers cumulative effects to prepare for possible future forest conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides direction to forestry professionals regarding:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the location and timing of road and cutblock layouts</li> <li>harvest practice modifications to address potential environmental impacts (e.g. protecting sensitive watersheds)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Long-Term Timeframe (not defined) <b>Strategic Land Use Plan</b></p>	<p>10-Year Timeframe <b>Forest Landscape Plan</b></p>	<p>5-Year Timeframe <b>Operational Plan</b></p>

## 8. WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE PREPARATION OF A FOREST LANDSCAPE PLAN?

Five legal objectives must be considered in the development of a Forest Landscape Plan (FLP)<sup>1,2</sup>:

- supporting the production and supply of timber in the forest landscape area;
- supporting the protection and conservation of the environment, which will consider ecosystem health;
- managing the values placed on forest ecosystems by Indigenous peoples;
- managing the values placed on forest ecosystems by local communities; and
- preventing, mitigating, and adapting to impacts caused by significant disturbances to forests and forest health as a result of climate change including wildfire, insects, disease, and drought.

## 9. WHAT LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS APPLY TO FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS?

The development of Forest Landscape Plans is legislated by [the Forest Statutes Amendment Act, 2021 \(Bill 23\)](#). Several other regulatory requirements that apply to Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) include those that apply to harvest and forestry practices such as the *Land Act*, *Water Sustainability Act* and *Forest and Range Practices Act*.

Other natural resource statutes also apply.

All land use orders such as Old Growth Management Areas established under a Section 93.4 Land Use Objectives Order in the *Land Act* and those made under any of sections 5 to 15 of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* established through the Land Use Objectives Regulation and Government Action Regulation will also continue to apply as higher level landscape management measures.

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<sup>1</sup> [Bill 23, Forest Statutes Amendment Act \(Section 2.22\), 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parl, 2021 \(third reading 23 November 2021\)](#).

<sup>2</sup> There is no hierarchy of importance associated with these objectives.

## 10. WHICH FOREST TENURES DOES THE SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLAN APPLY TO?

Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) apply to individuals and companies operating under the *Forest Act*. The Sunshine Coast FLP Pilot applies to the following forest tenure types:

- Forest Licences, including replaceable forest licenses and non-replaceable forest licenses;
- Forest Licences to Cut;
- Timber licences; and
- BC Timber Sales.

In the future other tenure types, such as Tree Farm Licences, Community Forest Agreements and First Nations Woodland Licenses may also be brought into the Sunshine Coast FLP.

FLPs will also apply to Tree Farm Licences and Community Forest Agreements.

Holders of woodlot licenses and other small area-based tenure agreements are exempt from the requirement to operate under the FLP.

## 11. DO FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS APPLY TO WOODLOTS?

Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) do not apply to woodlot license holders because they operate under a different planning model than major forest licensees, community forests, First Nations woodland licenses, and BC Timber Sales. Woodlot-specific changes are under consideration for future amendments in consultation with the BC Federation of Woodlot Associations.

The Chief Forester may still request information from woodlot license holders about their operating areas for the purposes of developing or monitoring under the FLP.

## 12. WHAT IS THE IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE FOR THE SUNSHINE COAST FOREST LANDSCAPE PLAN PILOT?

**Within the Sunshine Coast Forest Landscape Plan Pilot**, the transition from current Forest Stewardship Plans (FSPs) to the Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) will take approximately 1 year. Corresponding Forest Operating Plans (FOPs) will be required 6 months to 1 year after the FLP is initiated. FLPs will be initiated across the province over time by collaborating with Indigenous governing bodies that are willing and prepared to engage in the planning activity. The expected timeline for FLPs across the province is approximately 10 years.

### 13. WILL FOREST LICENCE HOLDERS BE ABLE TO CONTINUE THEIR OPERATIONS DURING THE TRANSITION FROM FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLANS TO FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS?

Yes. Once a Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) is established, licensees will have **between 6 months and 1 year** to develop and submit a Forest Operations Plan (FOP) for approval. An FOP is an operational plan developed by licence holders that is consistent with the objectives of the FLP. The FOP must show approximate locations of cutblocks and roads for up to a 5-year period.

If a licensee submits a FOP *within* 6 months of the establishment of an FLP, their existing Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) remains valid until the FOP is approved or rejected. Alternatively, if a licensee *does not* submit a FOP within 6 months of FLP establishment, their existing FSP remains valid for 1 year following the FLP establishment, or until the natural expiration of the FSP, whichever is sooner.

FLPs may provide direction as to the number of FOPs in the FLP planning area. Guided by the objectives and outcomes of the FLP we are seeking to eliminate the challenges of the FSP processes including having different FSPs.

### 14. DO STAKEHOLDERS, COMMUNITIES AND THE PUBLIC HAVE A SAY IN THE FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANNING PROCESS?

Yes. Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) encourage stakeholders, communities, and the public to provide input throughout development and implementation of an FLP. The goal of stakeholder and public engagement is to:

- Enhance awareness and understanding of Forest Landscape Planning;
- Learn about the current condition of the plan area, including challenges, opportunities and expectations;
- Obtain feedback from Indigenous Nations, stakeholders, communities, and the public about their values and vision for the future of the landscape;
- Obtain feedback from Indigenous Nations, stakeholders, communities, and the public about what successful planning and management of the landscape looks like; and
- Support learning process among the planning team, Indigenous Nations, and stakeholder groups about the implementation and effectiveness of the FLP.

## 15. HOW ARE FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS USED?

Forest Landscape Plans (FLPs) set targets to meet management objectives and outcomes. FLPs are used to determine progress on meeting targets and achieving outcomes through effectiveness monitoring. Indicators that are measurable, feasible and credible will be selected to implement effectiveness monitoring over the 10-year period of the FLP. Planning guidelines for forestry operations identify:

- Requirements for new forest practices based on best available knowledge to support the forest resource values;
- Silvicultural systems and stocking standards to increase climate change resiliency and balance forest resource values;
- Requirements for forest practices, silvicultural systems or stocking standards;
- Areas temporarily set aside for ecosystem recovery and future forest state recruitment;
- Areas where cutblocks and roads should not be located; and/or
- Limits on cutblock size and configuration.

FLPs include specific reporting requirements for implementation and effectiveness monitoring, adaptive management procedures, and adherence to principles of ecosystem-based management.

The FLP framework allows for some flexibility at the local level for forest operators. Planning guidelines can be accepted as written in the FLP or forest operators can propose an alternative approach that might be better suited to achieving the outcome in specific operational circumstances. FLPs may be amended overtime through consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous governing body.

Click the link below for more information on Forest Landscape Planning.

[Forest Landscape Planning Information Bulletin](#)

## 16. DO FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS TAKE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS INTO CONSIDERATION?

Forest Landscape Plans consider the cumulative effects of human use in relation to forest management but not the cumulative effects from other forms of development (e.g. the growth of communities) or industrial activities (e.g., mine exploration or mining). The new FLP framework considers the condition of multiple forest values to build a common understanding of the cumulative effects of past and current forest management. This information is used to inform development of the Forest Landscape Plan, including direction

for coordinated management of forest licensees' activities at the landscape level to address cumulative effects.

## 17. HOW ARE FOREST LANDSCAPE PLANS GOING TO BE MONITORED AND MANAGED?

The Forest Landscape Plan (FLP) process as legislated in the *Forest Statutes Amendment Act, 2021* (Bill 23), includes specific requirements for monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of forest management activities prescribed in the FLP. Monitoring results are in turn used to inform adaptive management of the forest sector.

Every **five years** the Chief Forester is required to publish a monitoring report identifying the extent to which the outcomes determined in an FLP have been achieved over the reporting period. The monitoring framework reduces uncertainties and improve management practices by directly incorporating lessons learned from the outcomes of operational activities into subsequent management decisions

## 18. WHERE ARE WE IN THE FOREST LANDSCAPE PLAN PROCESS?

The Sunshine Coast Forest Landscape Plan Pilot Project is in Phase 2 of the six-phase process for developing a Forest Landscape Plan (FLP). The **six** phases are:

- **Phase 1: Initiate.** In this preparation and planning phase, ministry staff engage with Indigenous Nations about the FLP process and opportunities to work together. An 'FLP planning team' is assembled that includes key ministry staff, forest and range licensees, and Indigenous Nation representatives. A 'stakeholder review and input group' (SRIG) for those who have a known interest in forest management in the area is established in this phase. The purpose of the FLP planning team and SRIG is to review the context, intent, process, and outputs for an FLP.
- **Phase 2: Develop (we are here).** This phase consists of three major activities:
  - Assess the current condition of the plan area and work with Indigenous Nations to explore Indigenous land use and objectives associated with those uses;
  - Build a vision for the desired future landscape conditions and determine the best options to meet objectives and priorities over time;
  - Design management regimes for subunits across the area to provide clear direction to operational layout and silviculture staff at the stand level.
- **Phase 3: Draft.** The drafting phase requires assembling a strategy for monitoring and reporting, including a public review of the draft. The final review of the draft will be conducted with Indigenous Nations and SRIG. The FLP planning team will respond to key concerns and submit the final FLP for review and establishment by government.

- **Phase 4: Align.** Individual forest licensees will prepare Forest Operation Plans (FOP) that are consistent with the strategies and desired outcomes described in the FLP. This phase will involve consultation with Indigenous Nations and a public review for each FOP.
- **Phase 5: Implement.** Here monitoring and auditing procedures are initiated with the intention that they take place on an ongoing basis. 'On the ground' application of the FLP is used to provide opportunities for the FLP planning team, Indigenous Nations, and stakeholder groups to learn together over the time.
- **Phase 6: Adapt.** The FLP planning team will review results of implementation and effectiveness monitoring. Changes and influences on the landbase that emerge or are identified will be used to inform and prepare for the new planning cycle.