Collaborative planning for BC's spill response initiative: MaPP partner First Nations and BC Ministry of Environment

WORKSHOP REPORT

Background:

In February, 2016, the Province of BC released its *Third Intentions Paper* setting out the proposed terms of a new provincial spill response regime. In April, the Ministry of Environment convened a two-day symposium to discuss the proposed regime with a broad range of interested parties. The Province also contracted with the First Nations Fisheries Council to deliver a series of First Nations workshops that took place through May.

The symposium and workshops provided an opportunity for the Province to share information about proposed amendments to existing legislation, and proposed new regulations, that together will determine the content and implementation of BC's new spill response regime. Following these workshops, First Nations had a number of questions and concerns about the proposed new regime. In addition, the unique circumstances that exist along BC's central and north coast raised specific issues that required more detailed discussion.

To this end, the Ministry of Environment partnered with the Coastal First Nations – Great Bear Initiative (CFN) to deliver a one-day workshop in June, 2016. The workshop involved representatives of the Province and the First Nations participants in the Marine Planning Partnership (MaPP).

Outcomes:

Policy and technical staff from a number of First Nations, and CFN, attended the workshop. There was general agreement that the discussion was productive and that the workshop achieved the stated goal of providing an opportunity for First Nations to:

- share their perspectives with respect to BC's proposed spill response regime, as articulated in the *Third Intentions Paper*; and
- engage in discussion with provincial agencies regarding opportunities for collaborative work to develop and implement the regime within the MaPP region.

As a result of the workshop, several staff from First Nations expressed an interest in joining one or more Technical Working Groups to participate in the development of regulations.

The workshop also offered an opportunity to introduce a proposal for a Geographic Response Plan pilot project within the MaPP region, to capitalize on significant investment in information-gathering and institutional capacity building while establishing a model for seamless response planning across federal, provincial, and First Nations authorities. CFN and BC agreed to further discussions to refine the pilot project proposal.

CFN gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Province of BC in making this workshop possible.

CONTENTS:

This report comprises the following materials, attached:

- 1. Workshop summary notes
- 2. Powerpoint presentation: CFN Perspectives
- 3. Discussion paper: CFN Perspectives
- 4. Powerpoint presentation: North Coast GRP pilot project

Workshop on Collaborative Planning for BC's Spill Response Initiative: MaPP Partner First Nations and BC Ministry of Environment Wednesday June 22, 2016 Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, 580 West Hastings St, Vancouver

SUMMARY NOTES

Attending:

Leon Gaber, Portfolio Lead, Spill Response Initiative, BC Environment Ben Vander Steen, Director, Business Services – Environmental Protection, BC Environment Carley Coccola, Senior Policy Advisor, BC Environment Darcy Dobell, Coastal First Nations (CFN) Steve Diggon, CFN Stafford Reid, EnviroEmerg Consulting Chris McDougall, Haida Oceans Technical Team Sandra Manow, CFN Elise DeCola, Nuka Consulting Linda Nowlan, West Coast Environmental Law Alex Kirby, West Coast Environmental Law Laurie Whitehead, Heiltsuk First Nation Amanda Zinter, Haisla Nation Roger Sterritt, Gitga'at First Nation (via phone) Eddie Robinson, Gitga'at First Nation (via phone) Mark Biagi, Kitselas First Nation (via phone) David Taft, Kitselas First Nation (via phone)

Chair: Kelly Russ, CFN

Purpose of the Workshop: To share perspectives of CFN and MaPP partner First Nations with respect to the proposed spill response regime; and to discuss opportunities for collaborative work to develop and implement the spill response regime within the MaPP region. (Workshop agenda is attached for reference.)

Update from BC

Leon Gaber provided an update on current status of the spill response initiative. For more on the content of the proposed regime, see the Province's *Third Intentions Paper* at <u>https://engage.gov.bc.ca/spillresponse/intentionssummary/</u>

1. Status of Bill 21

- The Amendments to the Environmental Management Act (EMA or Bill 21) were submitted to legislature in early February and read three times in Parliament before being passed.
- Amendments to the EMA are broad in nature, and focus on enabling the Minister to create regulations regarding spill response.

- Between now and spring 2017, efforts will focus on developing an initial suite of regulations to give effect to the new regime.
- 2. First Nations engagement:
 - BC recognizes the importance of increased local capacity to support immediate and effective response. Greater participation of First Nations is needed and wanted, and the regime will create avenues for this.
 - As part of its engagement with First Nations, BC held six regional workshops in which 45 different First Nations participated. First Nations representatives are encouraged to participate in the technical working groups on specific topics. There will also be a First Nations working group.
 - Workshop content will be public, with reports back to stakeholders.
 - The Province intends to announce new regulations in spring 2017. Preparedness, response and recovery are key elements of the new regime; the initial suite of regulations will focus on the first two.
 - To date, three technical working groups have been initiated:
 - a. defining the threshold for 'regulated person', meaning defining to whom the regulations will apply;
 - b. mandatory response times;
 - c. spill contingency plans and definition of "worst case scenario".

CFN representatives who are interested and have not yet signed up for a working group should contact Carley Coccola at the second state of the sec

CFN perspectives on proposed spill response regime

Darcy presented an overview of the document *Perspectives on BC's Proposed Spill Response Regime* (powerpoint slides and document attached). BC representatives offered the following responses to key points in the paper:

- Governance and accountability: BC acknowledged that the *Intentions Paper* makes no mention of Aboriginal rights and title, and assured participants that this is not an indication of lack of recognition or respect. As a practical matter, BC generally does not specifically reference Aboriginal rights and title in legislation or regulations.
- Risk management: BC acknowledged the importance of considering consequences as well as probabilities, and noted that its definitions of "regulated persons" are based entirely on potential consequences rather than risk (e.g. by categorizing materials transported, rather than locations or practices). The province also intends that the regime be inclusive of all elements of casualty management.
- Response planning: BC intends to engage technical working groups in developing criteria for geographic response planning (GRP). The issue of oversight and ratification of GRPs, and the structure and role of advisory committees, will require further discussion.

• Preparedness and Response Organization (PRO): BC recognized First Nations interest in having a role in the certification of any PRO; at the same time, BC needs a system that can operate consistently province-wide. This issue will require further discussion.

Discussion: Setting the stage

This discussion focused on identifying opportunities, challenges, and areas for further work.

- 1. Accountability and oversight
 - *First Nations* noted the importance of ensuring the regime acknowledges existing Aboriginal rights and title, including the right to make decisions about lands and resources. For example, decisions about the relative priority of particular sites in emergency response can only be made by holders of Aboriginal title and/or the public trust. This means that geographic response planning must be done in a way that is accountable to First Nations and the Province, not to private interests.
 - All parties agree that there has to be a seamless regime across First Nations, provincial, and federal areas of authority. This will require tripartite discussions.
- 2. Discussion on First Nations participation:
 - BC acknowledged the benefits of building long-term capacity in First Nations to deal with spill response, and reiterated their encouragement for First Nations to engage in technical working groups. The province indicated it will seek funding to support First Nations participation in the working groups.
- 3. <u>Concerns about the structure and accountability of the PRO:</u>
 - Participants discussed the need to balance the "polluter-pay" principle with the need for accountability to First Nations and the Province, and with concerns that the industry will be managing and evaluating its own response activity. The proposed regime currently anticipates that the PRO will be industry-funded and industry-led, within a regulatory framework and standards established by the province.
 - This issue will require further discussion. Among other interests, participants agreed to further explore a possible First Nations role in the process of certifying a PRO.

Preparedness and Response Planning in the MaPP region

Steve Diggon provided an overview of current work to develop a strategy for spill response planning in the MaPP region, and introduced a proposal for a geographic response planning (GRP) pilot project. (Powerpoint slides attached).

Discussion:

- Participants noted the significant investment to date by BC and First Nations in MaPP's data collection and the SeaSketch information management platform, along with the broader need for renewed investment in provincial geospatial information management.
- Transport Canada is pursuing a pilot project in Area Response Planning along BC's south coast; however, this initiative uses a very different approach and—unlike the proposed north coast pilot—is not intended to deliver geographic response plans, and is not designed to integrate federal and provincial regimes. The north coast pilot project would therefore not duplicate any existing activity.
- Provincial representatives expressed interest in the idea of the north coast GRP pilot and encouraged First Nations to develop a more detailed project proposal for further discussion.

Next steps:

- CFN will develop a more detailed proposal for the north coast GRP pilot project, for review by BC. CFN will also share the proposal with Transport Canada during upcoming meetings in Ottawa, and will work with both Canada and BC to refine the proposal.
- CFN will submit the Perspectives document as part of the Ministry of Environment's comment period; other First Nations may also make their own submissions.
- CFN will continue to provide coordination and policy support to CFN members and MaPP partner First Nations with respect to the spill response initiative. This may include convening follow-up discussions to address key issues including questions of governance and accountability.

Workshop on Collaborative Planning for BC's Spill Response Initiative: MaPP Partner First Nations and BC Ministry of Environment

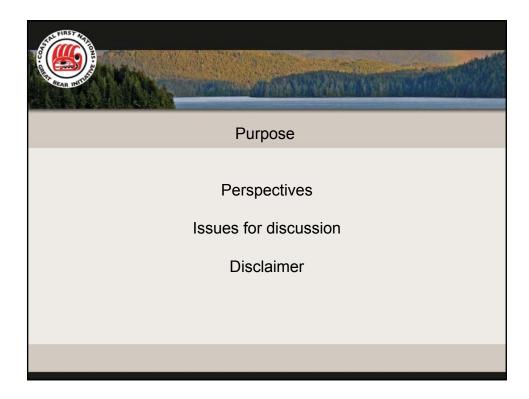
June 22, 2017 Room 370, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue 580 West Hastings St, Vancouver

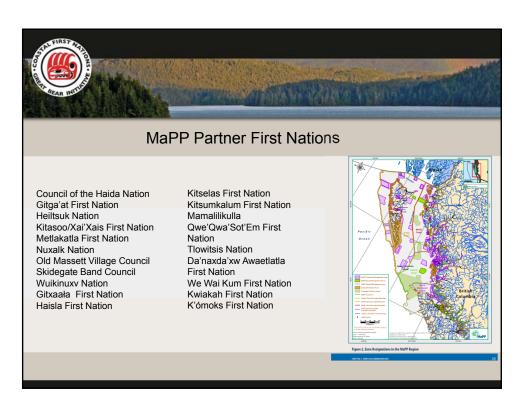
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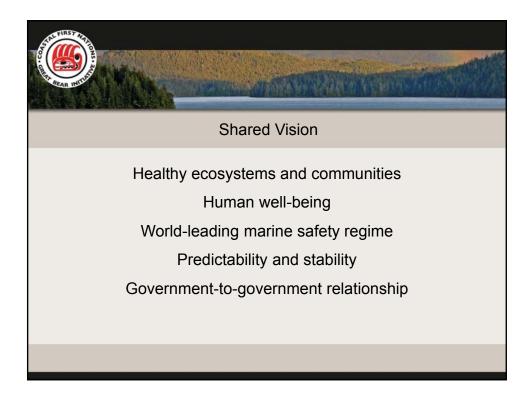
Proposed Agenda

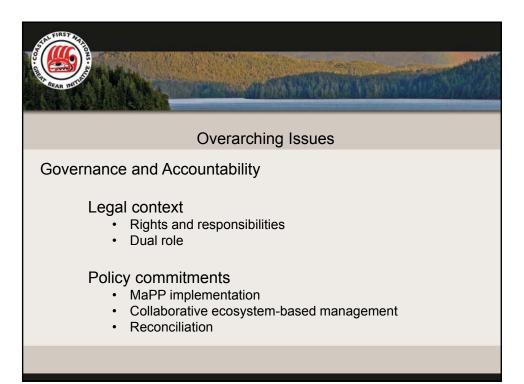
Time	Agenda Item	Notes	Responsibility
8:30	ARRIVAL AND COFFEE		
9:00	Meeting opening	Introductions, review agenda, set tone	Chair
9:15	Update from BC	Status of work towards spill response regime; what BC heard from FN regional workshops & how BC is responding	MoE
9:45	FN perspectives on proposed spill response regime	Presentation summarizing FN perspectives; Q&A	FN
10:30	BREAK		
10:45	Discussion: Setting the stage	Discussion aimed at identifying opportunities, challenges, and areas for further work.	All
12:30	LUNCH		
1:30	Preparedness and Response Planning in the MaPP region	Presentation summarizing existing collaborative work; discussion of issues, identification of potential challenges and opportunities for further work	FN
3:00	BREAK		
3:15	Discussion: Moving forward	Discussion aimed at reaching agreement on how best to work together on spill response in BC, including outreach to First Nations communities; integration with federal and tripartite initiatives; and stakeholder engagement Identification of next steps including deliverables, timelines,	All
		and accountabilities	
4:15	Meeting closing	Review and wrap up	Chair
4:30	ADJOURN		



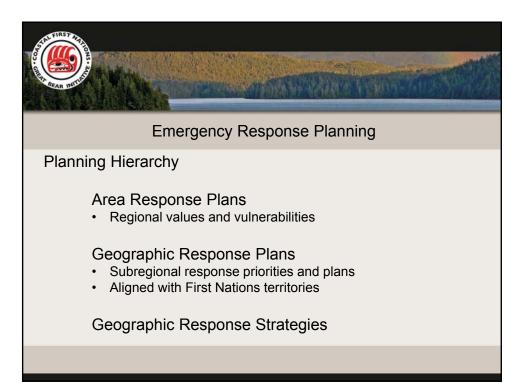




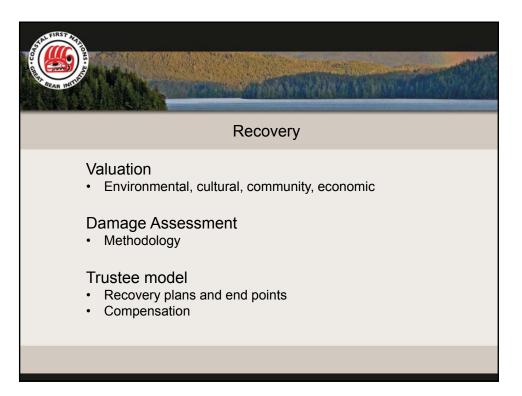


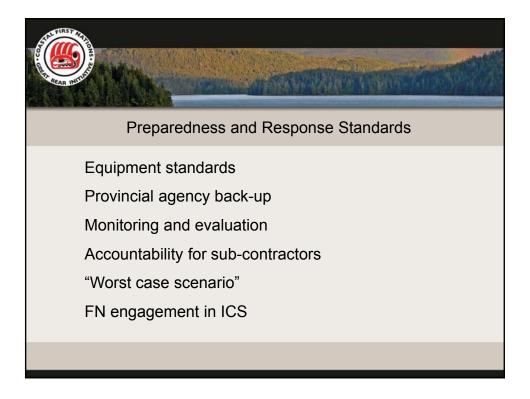














Background

The BC government is in the process of developing legislation and regulations to create a new provincial response regime for land-based spills. This includes spills that affect freshwater, coastal and marine environments. Spill threats include those from oil-based products and other hazardous materials, whether from vessels, vehicles, railways, pipelines, or storage facilities. The Province has passed a bill amending the existing *Environmental Management Act* to enable the Legislature to move forward with establishing the new regime. Many details will be defined subsequently through regulations under the amended *Act*.

BC is continuing to undertake outreach and engagement on the proposed regime and regulations. As part of its outreach, BC contracted the First Nations Fisheries Council to coordinate and facilitate a series of regional workshops for First Nations. In addition to these workshops, Coastal First Nations (CFN)¹ convened a separate workshop between the Ministry of Environment and the MaPP partner First Nations² on June 22, 2016.

This document sets out CFN's perspectives on key elements of the proposed spill response regime—as set out in the *Third Intentions Paper* along with workshop presentations—and identifies issues that will require further discussion between First Nations and the Province.

DISCLAIMER: This paper, and any related discussions, is not intended to fulfill any legal duty to consult with Aboriginal groups on any particular project. The Province will not rely on this document or related discussions as evidence of consultation on rights and title with any Aboriginal group.

Overarching comments and principles

CFN commends BC for taking steps to establish a provincial spill response regime. Much of the work to date represents a significant improvement over the existing regime. CFN also appreciates the government's commitment to establish a worldleading land-based spill response regime; the ecosystems and communities of British Columbia deserve nothing less.

¹ The Coastal First Nations is an alliance of First Nations on British Columbia's North and Central Coast and Haida Gwaii. The Coastal First Nations include Wuikinuxv Nation, Heiltsuk, Kitasoo/Xaixais, Nuxalk Nation, Gitga'at, Metlakatla, Old Massett, Skidegate, and Council of the Haida Nation.

² See Appendix 1 for a listing of the MaPP partner First Nations.

At the same time, First Nations have significant concerns about a number of elements of the proposed new regime. This includes areas where the current proposal is inconsistent with the law, and areas where proposed elements appear to fall short of the intended "world-leading" standard.

Overarching issues include the following:

Governance and Accountability

In its current form, the proposed legislation does not in any way acknowledge Aboriginal rights and title. Nor does it recognize the Province's commitments to reconciliation and government-to-government relationships with Indigenous peoples. Throughout, First Nations are identified as important participants – as responders, affected communities, stakeholders, businesses, and advisors, alongside municipal governments and industry – but not as governments with authority and stewardship responsibilities in their territories.

To be consistent with existing law and government policy in BC, it will be necessary for the spill response regime to provide for distinct avenues of First Nations engagement *as governments with legal title to and decision-making authority over their lands and resources.* Discussions between First Nations and BC are necessary to determine clear governance and accountability mechanisms that establish a role for First Nations alongside the BC government in overseeing planning processes, reviewing and approving proposed emergency response plans, and upholding other public trust responsibilities.

Risk Management

The current version of the proposed legislation emphasizes spill response, and makes little mention of other aspects of casualty management such as rescue, salvage, and establishing places of refuge. Effective casualty management can significantly reduce the potential impacts of a spill, and the new regime should ensure that appropriate planning, standards, and investments are in place for this aspect of emergency preparedness and response.

BC also indicates that it will take a "risk-based" approach to setting standards and industry requirements. This approach tends to emphasize probabilities over consequences, with the result that the regime may not set adequate standards for incidents that are relatively unlikely but have severe consequences, such as a major pipeline breach into a salmon river. It will be important to ensure that "risk" is defined broadly and in a manner that accounts for potential environmental, cultural, social, and economic consequences.

"World leading" Spill Response

Provincial officials and spokespeople have made it clear that implementation of the new regime is expected to meet the Province's commitment to "world-leading" landbased spill response, and to fulfil one of the government's five conditions for transport of heavy oil across the Province. CFN notes the following:

- The regime cannot be considered "implemented" until new regulations have been passed, geographic response plans have been developed and ratified, and communities and first responders have the necessary capacity, skills, and equipment to execute a meaningful response.
- The regime cannot be considered "world-leading" unless all of its key components meet world-leading standards including for information management, transparency, governance and accountability, and regulatory standards for response and recovery.
- The regime cannot be considered to meet any condition for heavy oil transport unless it includes a proven technology for responding effectively to spills of heavy oil (crude and bitumen-based oils) in large aquatic ecosystems such as coastal regions, lakes and rivers. In the absence of a demonstrably effective response, the regime itself will do little to strengthen the Province's ability to protect environmental, cultural, social, or economic interests in the event of a heavy oil spill.

These broad issues and principles are the backdrop to CFN's more specific questions and concerns regarding the proposed legislation, as set out in the next section.

Perspectives on key topics

Emergency Response Planning

The proposed regime references several standard elements of emergency response planning, but does not currently set out a comprehensive, coherent planning hierarchy. Leadership and accountability are scattered across different scales of planning. There are no clear provisions for government-to-government leadership, meaningful community engagement, standardized information management, or integration with other geospatial planning processes including watershed, coastal, and marine use plans; and there is no discussion of how planning boundaries will be rationalized with First Nations territories.

Discussions between First Nations and the Province will be necessary to develop a response planning hierarchy in which the following planning processes are clearly nested:

Regional Area Response Plans that set out large-scale emergency response considerations, and identify areas of particular vulnerability and sensitivity as priorities for sub-regional Geographic Response Planning. Area Response Planning must be led by and accountable to First Nations and the Province, and must ensure meaningful engagement of regional communities and interests.

Sub-regional Geographic Response Plans that define sites of particular ecological, cultural, economic, and community value (e.g. areas of concern), identify sub-regional capacities and logistical considerations (e.g., staging grounds, incident management and support facilities, workforce accommodations, medical support, etc.), and establish emergency response notifications, and other emergency preparedness requirements.

Key features of effective Geographic Response Planning in BC will include the following:

- First Nations and BC work together to establish a consistent process, content, and methodology for Geographic Response Plans (GRP)—and their associated Geographic Response Strategies (GRS)—to define sub-regional GRP boundaries and priorities; identify areas of concern for protection by GRSs, review and track public and stakeholder engagement; and enable provincial and First Nation approval of GRP and GRS products.
- The regime establishes province-wide standards for data collection, information management, and accessibility, using tools such as those employed in Alaska (the Cook Inlet Response Tool (CIRT) and Geographic Response Information Database (GRID) can be used to support GRP for coastal regions, as well as inland aquatic systems).
- The response regime, and its supporting information management systems, is seamless across terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine environments; and across areas of federal and provincial jurisdiction.
- Each Geographic Response Planning process is co-led by the Province and the First Nations with title and stewardship responsibilities within the sub-region, with coordination and expertise supplied by the Preparedness and Response Organization, consultants, and agency specialists.
- Geographic response planning, identification of places of refuge, and related planning requirements are supported by investments in equipment, training, and distributed capacity, to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of response—especially in remote communities.
- Planning processes are tracked in accordance with clear work plans and timelines, and planning products are approved by First Nations and the Province.

Geographic response planning is an important vehicle for collaborative multi-party planning and decision-making. Done well, GRPs will support better relationships, increase community capacity, and strengthen public confidence in the spill response regime. For this reason, the governance structure and accountability provisions are as important to the regime as are the planning products themselves.

Spill Contingency Plans

In contrast to Area Response Plans, Geographic Response Plans, and Geographic Response Strategies, Spill Contingency Plans are specific to individual operators and the substances for which they are responsible. The proposed regime sets out expectations for the development and exercise of Spill Contingency Plans. While these are sometimes described as part of the planning hierarchy, Spill Contingency Plans are a distinct order of planning and do not replace Geographic Response Strategies.

Preparedness and Response Organization

The current proposal for the spill response regime, which anticipates that response planning will be led by a Preparedness and Response Organization (PRO) established by and accountable to industry, does not meet world-leading standards and is not acceptable to CFN member First Nations. First Nations and the Province should work together to define the governance, role, and responsibilities of the provincial PRO(s) in accordance with the following criteria:

- Given its role in planning for and responding to incidents that affect Aboriginal title lands and public resources, it is essential that the PRO be accountable to First Nations and to the Province; and that it be structured in a manner that recognizes First Nations rights and title along with robust stakeholder engagement.
- The primary role of the PRO in casualty or spill preparedness is to serve as an expert resource, providing a service to industry and government agencies. This could include coordinating the development of GRPs and GRSs within their operating area, with oversight by First Nations and the Province.
- The primary role of the PRO in casualty or spill response is to be first-on-scene with the skills and tools to conduct a situation assessment, establish incident command, invoke Geographic Response Strategies, arrange logistics, and request external resources from private-spill contractors, agencies, and First Nations, as needed.
- First Nations must have the opportunity to certify or approve any PRO that intends to operate within their territories. Protocols will be required with respect to the gathering and management of information about resources and values.
- In the event that an incident occurs in an area where there is no PRO, it is essential that the Province have the capacity to undertake the response, with engagement by First Nations, through a strengthened Provincial Environmental Emergencies Program.

Recovery

The proposed new regime anticipates new regulations requiring spillers to develop clear action plans for environmental recovery and restoration. The Province also acknowledges the need for a more comprehensive approach to compensation for lost environmental values. However, there are a number of issues requiring more discussion between First Nations and the Province:

- Valuation: the current proposal contemplates recovery and compensation for environmental values, but does not yet address social, cultural, or economic values. There is not yet any discussion of how First Nations would work with provincial agencies to determine the range of values at stake. It is essential that the regime include regulations requiring assessment and evaluation of the full range of values affected by a spill; that adequate resources are invested to gather necessary baseline data to support effective valuation; and that there be provisions for long-term environmental monitoring and follow-up damage assessments as necessary.
- There is not yet a clear methodology for valuing environmental, cultural, or other damages (including values that have no market equivalent). First Nations and the Province will need to work together to develop a valuation model. Other jurisdictions provide good examples of options for natural resource damage assessment, which could be broadened to encompass other values. The new regime must include regulations that establish a dedicated spill response and compensation fund, based on industry contributions.
- It is essential that there be regulatory provisions to ensure that polluters pay the full costs of cleanup, recovery, residual damage, and compensation.
- Regulations should ensure that salvage is a standard element of spill response, clean-up and recovery, guided by collaborative planning and execution.
- In some other jurisdictions, damage assessments are conducted with the oversight of a Trustee group that guides the calculation and distribution of compensation. This helps both to ensure accountability and to avoid long—and costly—court battles over compensation. The regime must include regulations that provide for the establishment of a Trustee group to guide compensation programs and monitor results.

Preparedness and response standards

In addition to the governance principles and policy issues described above, First Nations look forward to working with BC to uphold world-leading standards on a range of technical matters including:

- Regulations to establish standards for the type, quantity and location of spill response equipment required for effective response;
- Provisions to ensure that the Province has the mandate and capacity to step in to execute a response if the spiller is not doing an adequate job;
- Development of systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of ongoing training, contingency planning, post-incident reviews, and recovery;
- Mechanisms to ensure that spillers are accountable for the performance of response sub-contractors;
- Development of a mutually-agreed definition of "worst-case scenario" for purposes of emergency response planning and preparedness, including spill contingency planning;

• Requirements for First Nations participation in the Incident Command System (ICS) and its associated Unified Command protocol, as well as engagement in key ICS functions such as the Environmental Unit.

First Nations capacity-building, training and employment

First Nations individuals are often the first responders to emergencies, and First Nations communities are often on the front line of potential impacts. In both instances, significant new investments are needed to ensure adequate capacity, training, and equipment to support First Nations preparedness and engagement. This should include establishing permanent, full-time, professional response teams.

The new regime will bring opportunities for training and employment for First Nations individuals and businesses, along with investment in community infrastructure. First Nations may wish to consider creating their own Preparedness and Response Organizations, or establishing partnerships with other interests.

Several initiatives are already under way to develop employment, training, and capacity-building strategies at community and regional scales. Further development of the provincial spill response regime should support and complement these initiatives.

The opportunity

In recent years, BC and CFN have worked together to establish world-leading regimes for ecosystem-based management and government-to-government planning. While these processes require dedicated efforts, the return is significant: improving ecological integrity; advancing human well-being; and promoting certainty, stability, and reconciliation.

CFN looks forward to working with the Province to bring the same principles and commitment to the establishment of a new provincial spill response regime. Together, we can establish a truly world-leading regime that recognizes Aboriginal rights and title; protects British Columbia's extraordinary ecological, cultural, community, and economic values; and promotes the trust and confidence that is at the heart of social license and investment certainty.

Appendix 1: MaPP partner First Nations

Coastal First Nations - Great Bear Initiative, as directed by

- Council of the Haida Nation
- Gitga'at First Nation Hartley Bay
- Heiltsuk Nation
- Kitasoo/Xai'Xais First Nation
- Metlakatla First Nation Metlakatla
- Nuxalk Nation
- Old Massett Village Council
- Skidegate Band Council
- Wuikinuxv Nation

North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society (NCSFNSS), as directed by:

- Gitga'at First Nation Hartley Bay
- Gitxaała First Nation Kitkatla
- Haisla First Nation Kitamaat Village
- Kitselas First Nation Kitselas
- Kitsumkalum First Nation Kitsumkalum
- Metlakatla First Nation Metlakatla

Nanwakolas Council, as directed by:

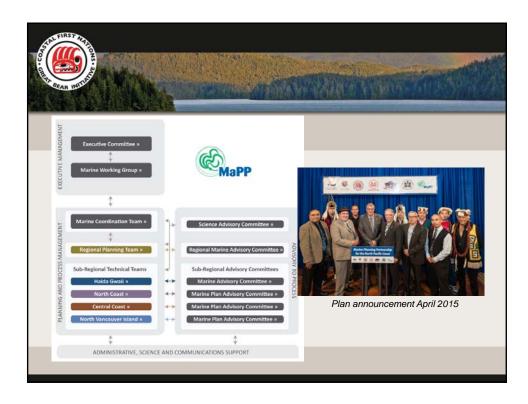
- Mamalilikulla Qwe'Qwa'Sot'Em First Nation
- Tlowitsis Nation
- Da'naxda'xw Awaetlatla First Nation
- We Wai Kum First Nation
- Kwiakah First Nation
- K'ómoks First Nation

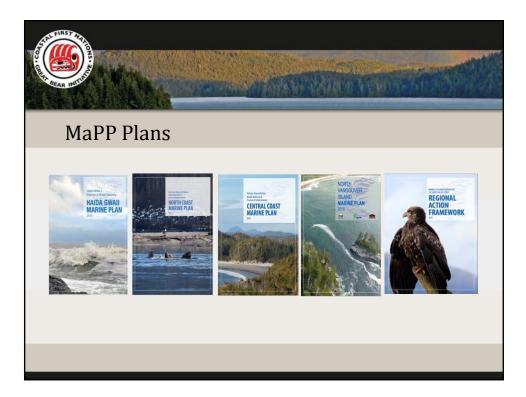


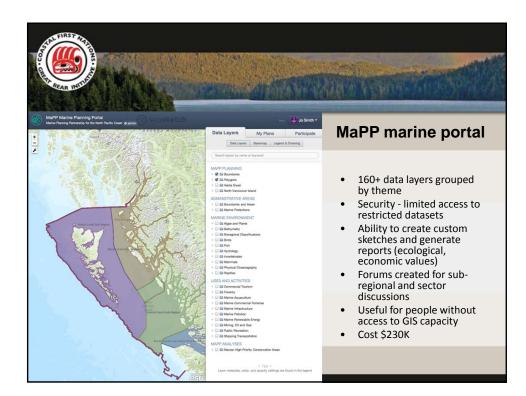










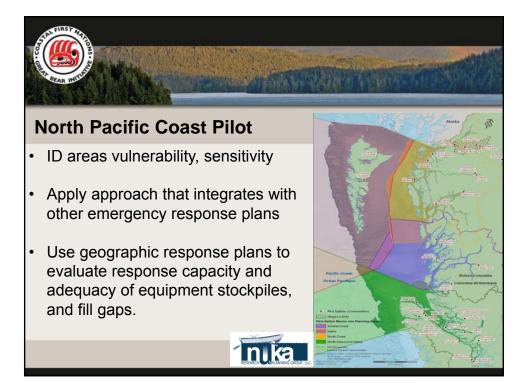






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North Pacific Coast Pilot

- Develop local response capacity
- Public and stakeholder review and input, particularly into site selection/prioritization process.
- Utilize standard tactics and terminology.
- Test strategies during field deployments under realistic conditions, and refine plans accordingly.



