



BC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework Frequently Asked Questions

Why does the Framework prioritize ecosystem health and biodiversity, and what does that mean?

- B.C. is rich in natural resources, and industries like timber harvesting and mining have long been, and will continue to be, an important part of the province's economy. At the same time, biodiversity and ecosystem health are under threat and B.C.'s future resilience depends on the thoughtful, integrated and inclusive stewardship of the air, land, water and all living things.
- That's why we're making changes to ensure land use policies, decisions and actions consider impacts on ecosystems and the benefits they provide. We need a more holistic approach to make sure ecosystems can sustain themselves and protect all species and varieties of life. This will also help to ensure the long-term social and economic well-being of communities throughout B.C.

Why do we need to prioritize ecosystem health and biodiversity? Why now?

- We're taking action to protect ecosystem health and biodiversity in the face of climate change. Severe drought and water shortages, record-breaking forest fires, atmospheric rivers and major flooding events, heatwaves, and landslides are increasingly impacting all British Columbians.
- This work is important because biodiversity and healthy ecosystems provide a range of environmental, social, cultural, and health benefits for communities. These include clean air and water, spiritual practices, and food sustainability as well as preserving Indigenous ways of life which in turn, will enhance our reconciliation efforts with First Nations in B.C.

How will the Framework actually protect biodiversity and ecosystem health?

- The Framework represents a new way of looking at the natural world around us. It will approach land and water management in a more proactive way that considers the needs of the natural environment, biodiversity and ecosystems first.
- This new way of doing things will apply to all sectors and ecosystems across B.C. It will also provide strategic direction to transform land and water stewardship to respond to the challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change. The goal is to

maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecological integrity to ensure healthy and resilient communities and economies for generations to come.

How does the Framework tie into other related key initiatives?

- The Framework outlines B.C.'s statement of intent, principles and actions that set the strategic direction for prioritizing biodiversity and ecosystem health across the province. At the same time, there are many initiatives and programs already underway in B.C. that support similar goals and intended outcomes. For example, the Watershed Security Strategy, Coastal Marine Strategy and Together for Wildlife Strategy are all looking to support healthy ecosystems. The draft Framework will help align and integrate ongoing initiatives by setting a provincial vision and building efficiencies.

How will the Framework be developed and implemented?

- Phase 1: The Province is now formally consulting with First Nations Rights and Title Holders, and engaging with multiple natural resource sectors and industries, as well as local governments, on the draft Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework, which presents the proposed policy intent to support the transformation of B.C.'s land and water management and stewardship approaches.
- Phase 2:
As part of a second phase, we will be looking to:
 - co-develop new legislation with First Nations,
 - update legislative and other enabling tools to achieve the vision and intent of the Framework, and
 - implement key measures to take action immediately with existing tools.

What steps are needed to make the Framework a reality and start the work?

- An implementation plan will be released alongside the final Framework, which will identify immediate, medium and longer-term priorities, including any legislative changes that are needed to make the Framework a reality.

If you have any further questions, please email biodiversity.ecosystemhealth@gov.bc.ca