
New Direction for Strategic Land Use Planning in BC

**Amending Strategic Land and Resource Plans:
Policy and Procedures**



**Integrated Land Management Bureau
Ministry of Agriculture and Lands**

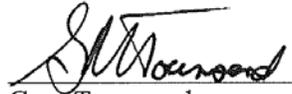
December 12, 2007

**New Direction for Strategic Land Use Planning in BC
Approval and Sign-Off Cover Sheet**

Name of Policy:	Amending Strategic Land Use Plans: Policies and Procedures
Policy Application:	
Implementing Agency:	ILMB
Relationship to Previous Policy:	Replaces previous "unofficial" policy direction that was never formally approved.
Requirements for Amendment:	Amendments to this policy will require the approval of ADMCILM.

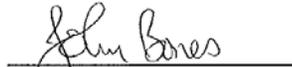
Date reviewed and endorsed by ADMCILM:

December 6, 2007



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1.0 WHY THIS POLICY?

Strategic Land and Resource Plans (SLRPs) provide direction for the management and allocation of public lands, marine areas and resources over a defined area. A significant amount of resources have been invested into the development of strategic land, marine and resource use plans which have produced a wide range of benefits.¹

An important facet of planning is ensuring that the plans that have been developed are kept current to reflect policy and legislation changes, new critical information such as First Nations' interests and values and/or major environmental changes. Therefore, an amendment process is needed to facilitate changes to existing plans to help ensure that the significant past investment is maintained and that they remain relevant and locally supported.

A New Direction for Strategic Land Use Planning in BC (New Direction) was approved in late 2006 (<http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/lup/>). This policy outlines a 'new direction' for B.C.'s land use planning system. Examples of what this policy states with regards to plan amendments includes a need to focus these activities to specific components of the plan as opposed to the entire plan, that determinations on whether or not to proceed with plan amendments be subject to a more rigorous decision-making process and the identification of a list of circumstances that may warrant plan component updating or amendment.

This document describes the Integrated Land Management Bureau's (ILMB) policy for amending strategic Crown land, marine and resource use plans and aligns with government's New Direction. Any inconsistencies between this policy and the direction for addressing amendments that is provided in approved Strategic Land and Resource plans should be brought to the attention of the appropriate IAMC or Managers Committee for resolution.

Guidance for amendments to legal objectives is not addressed in this document as it is the subject of a separate policy.²

Direction for amendments to existing protected area boundaries (e.g. provincial parks, conservancies) is covered by a separate policy administered by the Ministry of Environment and is not addressed by this document.

2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are as follows.

Accountability – Plan amendment decisions will be made in a consistent manner, according to written policies and procedures, and by government officials with an approved mandate to implement and maintain land use plans.

¹ See *A New Direction for Strategic Land Resource Planning in BC* (<http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/lup/>)

² See *Land Use Objectives Regulation: Policy and Procedures* (include link to policy when completed)

Effectiveness – Plan amendments will be undertaken as required to maintain the integrity and utility of land use plans, and to ensure continuation of the widespread support for the plans from government agencies, First Nations, stakeholder organizations, and the public.

Efficiency – The level of documentation, consultation and necessary approvals associated with plan amendments will be commensurate with the significance and risk of the proposed amendments.

3.0 AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

The first step in the process is to identify an issue or concern that may require an amendment to the plan. The need may be identified by individuals or organizations who are subject to the plan, or it may be identified internally by government when undertaking a comprehensive review of a plan. An amendment proposal may be limited to a single issue or a suite of issues that require attention.

3.1 Written Proposals for Plan Amendment

An amendment proposal can be brought forward by any person or organization, including ILMB, other provincial agencies, First Nations, federal or local governments, stakeholder organizations, Plan Implementation Monitoring Committees and the public. For efficiency an amendment proposal should generally be developed in consultation with ILMB.

Recognizing that there are limited resources to undertake amendments it's suggested that if there is more than one amendment proposed for a specific plan that these be considered together rather than individually. This approach could result in the consideration of a specific amendment being deferred until a later date in order to facilitate this.

Amendment proposals must be submitted in writing to the Manager, Client Services in the appropriate ILMB service centre³. Written proposals must include:

- (1) a description of the proposed amendment;
- (2) the rationale for the proposed amendment, and a brief description of its significance and implications;
- (3) suggested text for the proposed amendment; and,
- (4) a map of any proposed boundary revision(s) associated with the proposed amendment.

³ Generally the project description report, Appendix A of the *Initiating Planning Projects and Developing a Business Case: Policies and Procedures* can be adapted and used as the basis for the amendment proposal.

The proposed amendment(s) is reviewed and a determination made by ILMB if the proposal should be:

- (1) returned to the originating party where the submission is incomplete;
- (2) rejected because it is unnecessary or inappropriate (e.g. an effort to renegotiate what was agreed to in the plan, such as the location of protected area boundaries);
- (3) referred because it would more appropriately be dealt with as part of another processes (e.g. effectiveness monitoring, research initiative, etc); or,
- (4) accepted and classified into the appropriate type of amendment according to the criteria described in Section 4 of this policy statement.

When assessing amendment proposals it's expected that the same criteria used for new planning projects will be used. These criteria are outlined below.⁴

- Addresses major emerging land use conflicts or competition among different user groups.
- Provides a more certain and efficient decision-making environment that provides a stable climate for business investment.
- Addresses First Nations opportunities, constraints, values and interests.
- Identifies economic opportunities and constraints associated with public lands and resources.
- Addresses government commitment to major conservation or stewardship initiative.

In cases where there are different perspectives between agencies with regards to whether work should be undertaken on an amendment, these issues can be raised with the Inter-agency Management Committee (IAMC) or Managers Committee as appropriate for resolution.

If a plan amendment proposal is accepted and classified as either a minor or major amendment it should be treated as a potential new planning project and it should be processed in a manner that is consistent with other new planning projects. More details on this process can be found in the following New Direction policy document: *Initiating Planning Projects and Developing a Business Case: Policies and Procedures*. In particular, a business case should be developed which addresses issues such as benefits and costs associated with the project, identifies resources required to develop and implement the project, etc.

Once a business case has been approved or, if the amendment proposal was classified as an administrative revision(s), the process in Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 of this document must be followed.

⁴ See Table 2 in the *Initiating Planning Projects and Developing a Business Case: Policies and Procedures* for more information on the criteria to be used.

3.2 Possible Triggers for Plan Amendment

The following list of triggers is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations that could result in a proposal for an amendment to an existing plan:

- a major ecological change (e.g. mountain pine beetle epidemic);
- changes in legislation and policy;
- emerging land and resource use conflicts due to population growth, increased natural resource demand, new technology or new use of resources;
- the need to address First Nations' interests or concerns consistent with the New Relationship;
- outcome of a First Nations treaty settlement;
- new research results related to resource use and management;
- changes in classification systems (i.e. BEC classification);
- refinements or edits are needed to improve the clarity or to address errors or omissions;
- changes identified as a result of more detailed operational planning; or,
- proposals from individuals or organizations related to the plan area and objectives.

4.0 TYPES OF PLAN AMENDMENTS

As discussed above, plan amendment processes are classified by the Manager, Client Services as administrative revisions, a minor amendment or major amendment.

The most significant differences between the three types is the person or committee responsible for authorizing the project to begin and the requirement to complete a business case. Administrative revisions are minor technical changes to a plan which can be approved by the Manager, Client Services and do not require a business case to be developed. Minor amendments are more significant revisions that involve some social choice decisions. Minor amendments require a business case that must be approved by IAMCs (or their delegates) before the project can begin. Similarly major amendments require a business case to be approved by ADMCILM (or their delegates).

The defining characteristics of the three types of amendments are described below and are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Plan Amendments

	Administrative Revision	Minor Amendment	Major Amendment
Highlight of Main Characteristics	Administrative or maintenance oriented Does not substantively affect plan's strategic direction	Changes with limited social choice decisions Low potential for political profile elevation Sufficient regional resources	Changes with significant social choice decisions Moderate to high potential for political profile elevation (e.g. First Nations interests, international cross-boundary issues) Insufficient regional resources
Responsibility	Manager Client Services approval	IAMC approval PIMC review and comment	ADMCILM approval IAMC endorsement PIMC review and comment
Project Management	Does not require a business case or other project management documentation	Use project management documentation Business case is needed	Use project management documentation Business case is needed
Notice and Consultation	Public and First Nations consultation not normally required Notice of approved changes placed on ILMB planning website	Yes public consultation and First Nations involvement required Specific methods and level of public consultation determined by IAMC and, if appropriate, First Nations and defined in Project Charter Apply the protocol with First Nations Leadership Council on collaborative planning with First Nations (if applicable).	Yes public consultation and First Nations involvement required Specific methods and level of public consultation determined by IAMC, ADCMILM and, if appropriate, First Nations and defined in Project Charter Apply the protocol with First Nations Leadership Council on collaborative planning with First Nations (if applicable).
Socio-Economic and Environmental Impact Analysis	Not required	May be required as determined by IAMC or Managers Committee Specific methods and levels of analysis determined by the IAMC and possibly others, as defined in Project Charter	Yes, required Specific methods and levels of analysis determined by the IAMC, ADCMILM and possibly others, as defined in Project Charter

4.1 Administrative Revision

Administrative revisions are minor technical changes to a plan, including revisions which:

- (1) do not affect the intent of the plan's existing strategic direction;
- (2) are not expected to have socio-economic or environmental implications;

- (3) are not expected to generate concerns or a negative reaction from other agencies, First Nations, stakeholder organizations, or the public;
- (4) are administrative and / or maintenance oriented; and,
- (5) require minimal resources.

Examples include amendments that may be needed to accommodate:

- refinements or edits as needed to improve the clarity of resource management intent, or address errors or omissions;
- changes to the spatial configuration of non-legal old growth management areas as a result of more detailed operational planning; or,
- changes required to make the plan conform to new legislation or regulations, higher-level government policy decisions, or to accommodate the management direction suggested by more detailed subsequent plans that have been approved.

4.1.1 Process for Administrative Revision

Administrative revisions can be done entirely at the regional level as the approval decision rests with the Manager, Client Services. There is normally no requirement for consultation with groups or interests. The Manager, Client Services will, however, consult with PIMC and the IAMC as necessary. A technical evaluation of socio-economic or environmental impacts of proposed plan revision is not required.

Approved administrative revisions are filed with the appropriate ILMB service centre and are posted on the ILMB land use planning website. The PIMC, IAMC and originator of the amendment proposal are notified of the result. (See Figure 1.)

4.2 Minor Amendment

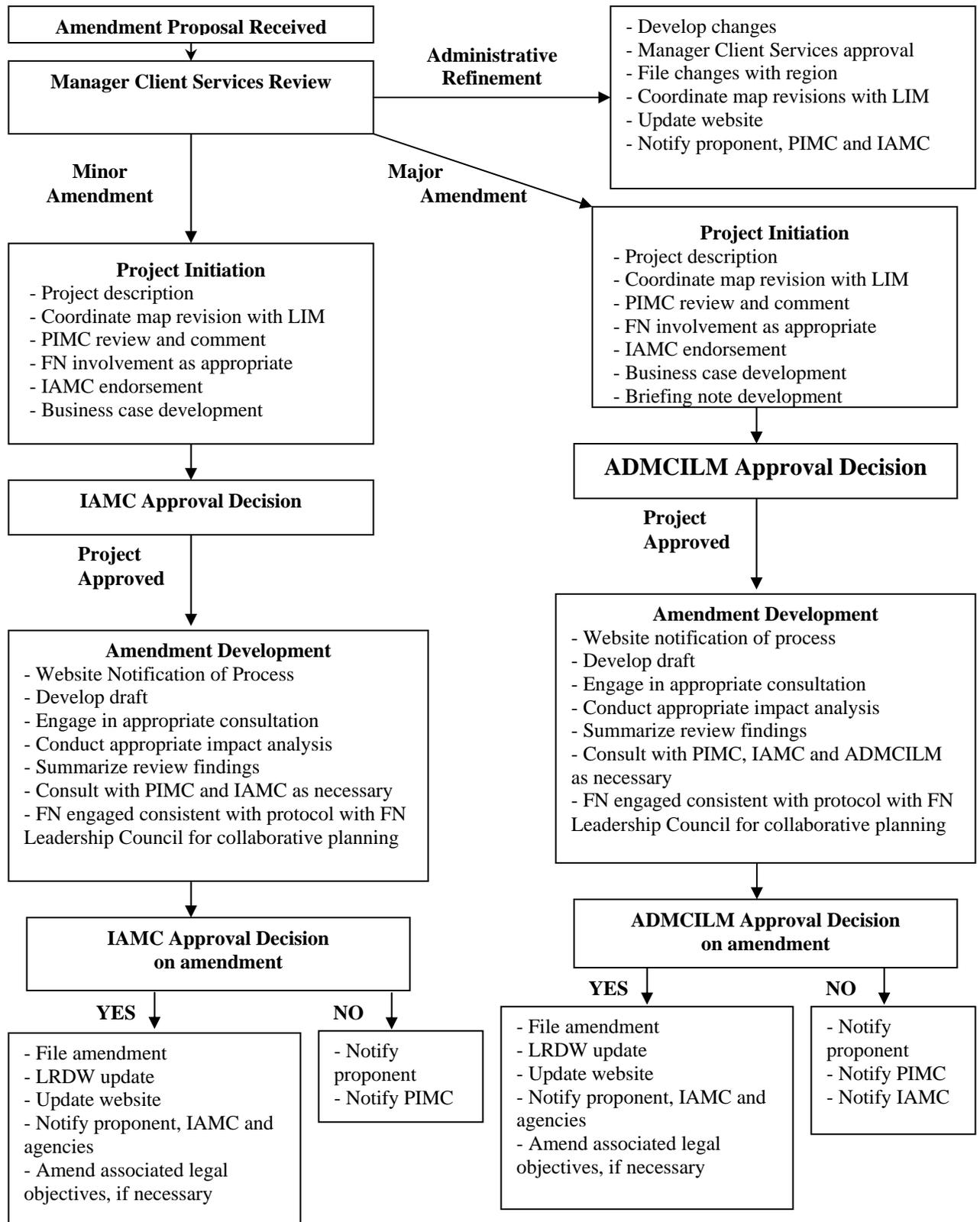
Minor amendments are important changes (i.e. not administrative revisions) that are approved at a regional level by IAMC and fit the following criteria:

- (1) limited to specific components of a plan, as opposed to entire plan;
- (2) sufficient resources are available regionally to support work on the amendment(s);
- (3) low to moderate complexity of resource issues;
- (4) limited social choice decisions with minimal socio-economic and environmental impacts;
- (5) low to moderate potential for conflict with stakeholders;
- (6) affected First Nations are engaged and/or affected First Nations concerns can be addressed in the revision; and,
- (7) low potential for elevated political profile.

Examples of minor amendments include:

- amendments to the plan to update biodiversity objectives and strategies to incorporate new science such as Natural Disturbance Unit Research; or,
- updating a plan to incorporate First Nations' interests where the social choice has already been approved by ADMCILM, DMCNRE or Cabinet.

Figure 1. Process for Amending Strategic Land and Resource Plans



4.2.1 Process for Minor Amendments

Amendment proposals that have been categorized as minor amendments can be dealt with at the regional level with IAMC approval. This authority may be delegated in whole or in part to sub-regional Management Committees (MC). At any time during the project, the IAMC may re-categorize the proposed amendment as a major amendment thus requiring ADMCILM approval.

The first step is to develop a project description report which is brought to the PIMC group for review and comment and the IAMC for approval (See Figure 1). All minor amendments require a business case although the level of detail and time invested in preparation should be reflective of the complexity and scale of the proposed amendment. Once an amendment project is approved, a notice is to be posted on the ILMB planning website stating that an amendment will be pursued.

To determine if a proposed amendment to a plan should be approved, appropriate consultation with affected interests is required. First Nations involvement on plan amendments should follow provincial and ILMB consultation policy and be consistent with any protocols between the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council for collaborative planning. In addition, an analysis of potential socio-economic and environmental implications is also required. The scope and approach for both consultation and analysis is customized to fit with the significance of the proposed amendment.

The decision to approve minor amendments rests with the IAMC or MC where delegated. Ideally, the PIMC would be supportive of the recommendations; however, their endorsement is not required for amendments to be approved. Approved minor amendments are filed with the appropriate ILMB regional office and are posted on the ILMB land use planning website. The intent is to maintain a history or archive of all amendments for each plan and/or plan area.

The originator of the amendment proposal is notified of the result at key decision points in the process (i.e. after the initial screening undertaken by ILMB, once a decision is made whether the business case is approved and after the decision is made to approve or not approve the amendment). Agencies, stakeholders and other parties as appropriate should also be notified of the outcome.

Where it is necessary to amend associated legal objectives as a result of the minor amendment, policy specific to legal objectives should be followed.⁵

⁵ See *New Direction Land Use Objectives Regulation: Policy and Procedures*

4.3 Major Amendment

Major amendments are significant changes (i.e. not administrative revisions) that are approved by the ADMCILM or a higher decision making authority where ADMCILM determines this is needed. An amendment proposal would be categorized as a major amendment if any of the following criteria are true:

- (1) comprehensive and thorough update of a plan;
- (2) high complexity of resource issues;
- (3) significant social choice decisions with potential for significant socio-economic and environmental impacts;
- (4) high potential for conflict with stakeholders;
- (5) high risk of not fully engaging affected First Nations;
- (6) moderate to high potential for elevated political profile;
- (7) insufficient resources available regionally; and/or,
- (8) a change to legislation is required (e.g. park boundaries).

Examples of major amendments may be:

- updating a plan for major resource changes (e.g. mountain pine beetle attack) or to incorporate First Nations' interests where amendments may impact most or all of the plan direction with significant social choice decisions, or
- updating a plan to incorporate new species at risk information or direction where there may be a significant socio-economic or environmental impact.

The scope and scale of a major amendment may be broad and comprehensive, or it may be narrow and contained, depending on the planning issues that need to be addressed. While comprehensive updates are discouraged under the New Direction, if one is proposed a strong business case is required to proceed. Where a business case can be made for a comprehensive and thorough update of a plan, it should be done through the development of a specific plan or planning study for the topic or issue in question and forwarded to ADMCILM for approval.

In the case where the major amendment is primarily to address First Nations' interests, the amendment process may be jointly delivered by the Province and the First Nation(s) in accordance with any protocol on joint or collaborative planning with First Nations that may be reached between the Province and First Nations (e.g. such as the one that is currently being discussed between the Province and the First Nations Leadership Council). This could entail a government-to-government approach to plan amendment(s) in consultation with the public and the existing PIMC for the plan that is the subject of the amendment.

4.3.1 Process for Major Amendments

Amendment proposals that have been categorized as major amendments are approved at the executive level. The process for major amendments is very similar to that described in minor amendments except that approval rests with the ADMCILM or higher authority. (See Figure 1.) A project description is developed and the PIMC is provided with an opportunity to review it and provide comments. The IAMC or Managers Committee then must endorse the project description. A business case and decision note is prepared in consultation with the IAMC and forwarded to the ADMCILM for approval. The ADMCILM may seek decision by a higher authority. Once an amendment project is approved, a notice is to be posted on the ILMB planning website stating that an amendment will be pursued.

To determine if a proposed amendment to a plan should be approved, appropriate consultation with affected interests is required. In instances where First Nations' interests have not been addressed through a collaborative plan amendment process they should be consulted on plan amendments according to provincial and ILMB consultation policy. In addition, an analysis of potential socio-economic and environmental implications is also required. The scope and approach for both consultation and analysis is customized to fit with the significance of the proposed amendment.

The decision to approve major amendments is made by the ADMCILM. IAMC endorsement of the recommendations will be sought before approval. If the amendment has been developed through a collaborative process with First Nations it is expected that they will ratify the amendment through a separate process. As was the case with minor amendments, the PIMC would ideally be supportive of the recommendations; however, their endorsement is not required for amendments to be approved.

Once approved, major amendments are filed with the appropriate ILMB regional office and are posted on the ILMB land use planning website. The intent is to maintain a history or archive of all amendments for each plan and/or plan area.

The originator of the amendment proposal, as well as agencies, stakeholders and other parties as appropriate, should be notified of the result at key decision points in the process.

Throughout the amendment process IAMC will be kept informed of project progress.

Where it is necessary amend associated legal objectives as a result of the major amendment, policy specific to legal objectives should be followed.⁶

⁶ See *Land Use Objectives Regulation: Policy and Procedure*