PROVINCIAL FOREST LANDS VISION

John Innes identified the existence of a vision for the forest as one of his measures to demonstrate BC is managing its forests sustainably. Currently, BC does not have an official vision statement for use in guiding the development of legislation, regulation and policy. This is reflected in the lack of a suitable statement in the Government's *State of the Forest Report* upon which to measure progress*.* Steve Mitchell has outlined why the recent ecological, economic and social changes suggest we need a new look at what we want from the forest. Ken Zielke, Bryce Bancroft and Gordon Weetman have suggested, in their Background Brief, "we need to formally commit to a set of guiding principles, a forest charter, to keep our evolving system aligned with enduring well-accepted principles of sustainable forest management, and ultimately to reduce the risks to our provincial forest asset over the long term." Within this charter would be a vision statement to give legal status to what BC citizens want from their forest lands and to minimize the application of short term and politically driven, decisions at the expense of the forest asset.

Politicians have a tendency to focus on short term decisions, consistent with the term of their mandate. Forests need a longer term vision if the full value of the resources is to be capitalized upon. In addition, politicians prefer maximum flexibility to allow them to respond to pressures by the public. A Provincial vision for the forest lands has been traditionally viewed as limiting to political parties of all persuasions. The contrast between the political desires and the forest needs is a challenge.

- ➔ [If British Columbia Managed Its Forests Sustainably](#)

- ➔ [Why We Need a New Vision for BC's Forests](#)

- ➔ [A Forest Management Charter for BC](#)

Challenge

How do we encourage Government to enter into a Provincial forest vision that will legally guide strategic and operational decisions to maintain or enhance the BC forest lands asset?