

SPATIALLY AND TEMPORALLY EXPLICIT STRATEGIC PLANS

A Framework Concept Description

Bill Bourgeois, PhD, RPF
President, New Direction Resource Management Ltd
Coordinator, Healthy Forests – Healthy Communities Initiative
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Why a spatially and temporally explicit Strategic Plan?

The Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) required by the forest manager to show the tactical level of planning has come under criticism by the Forest Practices Board¹. The requirement for forest managers to produce a spatially and temporally explicit landscape unit management plan to replace the FSP would address many of the concerns. This would also be a fundamental and supported document to demonstrate movement toward a regional community vision for the local forest.

Strategic Forest Planning Framework

The BC forest planning infrastructure² includes:

- 1) Legislative Acts and Regulations (e.g., Forest Act, Forest and Range Practices Act, etc.) that guide forest management decision-making.
- 2) Land Use Plans (LUP) of various forms provide guidance for strategic land use planning and objective setting³.
- 3) A Timber Supply Review (TSR) process that provides the basis for the Chief Forester determining the availability of timber supply through an Allowable Annual Cut (AAC).
- 4) Forest Managers required to provide a FSP to show the general direction forest harvesting will occur over the next several years.

Spatially and temporally explicit strategic plans have been done by some companies for internal use and others (e.g. Lignum Ltd Innovative Forestry Practices Agreement⁴ [IFPA]) as a strategic approach to forest management. More recently, Government and companies have initiated pilot projects (i.e., Integrated

¹ <https://www.bcfpb.ca/reports-publications/reports/forest-stewardship-plans-are-they-meeting-expectations/>

² <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/silviculture/timber-management-goals>

³ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/crown-land-water/land-use-planning/policy-guidance>

⁴ https://forestnet.com/LSIssues/Oct_00/forest_management.htm

Stewardship Strategies⁵ [ISS]) that use the methodology on Timber Supply Areas (TSA). However, this type of planning is not required or broadly used in BC.

The BC forest planning infrastructure, in-part, provides the inputs into a spatially and temporally explicit Strategic Plan within a Strategic Forest Planning Framework. The following graphic outlines the proposed framework, including the Strategic Plan and associated scenario modeling components.



Strategic Plan – Objective

To demonstrate spatially, temporally and explicitly how an identified management unit vision, including the desired future forest condition, for a given land area will be achieved within the short and long-term public expectations and industrial and environmental pressures related to the forest land base.

The Strategic Plan is a tool in the management of the forest resources in landscape units within a defined management area (e.g., First Nation Territory, Tree Farm License [TFL], TSA). As frequently identified by First Nations, any intervention on the forest land base will result in impacts associated with maintaining its integrity. The challenge is not to create impacts whereby the values are compromised to the extent of

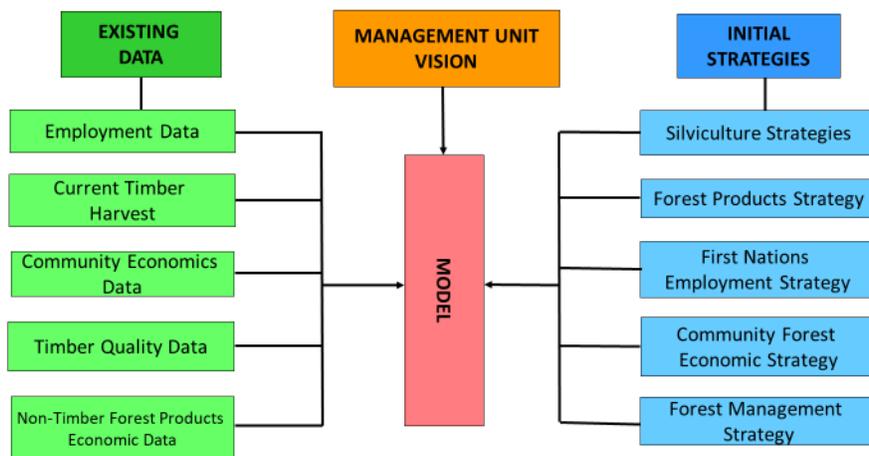
⁵ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/silviculture/silviculture-strategy-areas>

not being able to recover. This is consistent with the principles of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM)⁶ and ecosystem management⁷. The development of the Strategic Plan is an opportunity to explicitly evaluate scenarios from this perspective.

The Strategic Plan is based on the balancing of the various values and targets within the defined management area. This is done through scenario modeling involving adjustments to the targets, goals and strategies to achieve the balance while at the same time not impacting any value to the level it will not recover from an impact. There are numerous BC consultants with the scenario building software with experience in this area. The software has been used in BC and the USA for over 20 years.

Where strategies exist, they should be used. In other instances, they need to be developed through collaborative work between Government, First Nations, licensees and/or key stakeholders directly impacted by the strategy. Potential input components are outlined below.

Flow of Model Input



⁶ **Sustainable Forest Management (SFM):** “SFM is the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biological diversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfill, now and in the future, relevant ecological economic and social functions, at local, national and global levels, and that does not cause damage on other ecosystems.” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Canadian Institute of Forestry’s, *The Forestry Chronicle* Vol 70 (6): 666-674).

⁷ **Ecosystem management** is a process that aims to conserve major ecological services and restore natural resources while meeting the socioeconomic, political, and cultural needs of current and future generations. The principal objective of ecosystem management is the efficient maintenance and ethical use of natural resources. It is a multifaceted and holistic approach which requires a significant change in how the natural and human environments are identified. Several approaches to effective ecosystem management engage conservation efforts at both local and landscape levels and involve: adaptive management, natural resource management, strategic resource management, and command and control management. Ref: Wikipedia

The Strategic Plan integrates the various forest management strategies and produces outputs that can be used for other decisions such as operational practices, inventory data needs, modified resource strategies, etc.

Strategic Plan – Benefits

The key benefits of the Strategic Plan are:

- 1) Providing a supported and balanced strategic SFM plan to the public and other interested parties through:
 - a) A strategic document and maps that clearly articulate the desired future forest condition and fills the identified planning gap between land use plans and operational plans, potentially replacing the FSP.
 - b) A proactive approach to ensuring future forests become more resilient to climate change and other ecological, economic and/or social/cultural conditions.
 - c) Providing a more supportive sustainable forest management plan than the FSP.
 - d) Providing a long-term strategic plan to Municipal Governments identifying how forest management will contribute to their regional forest vision.
 - e) Providing a sustainable, available timber supply for community wood manufacturing investments.
- 2) Increasing efficiencies and advancing progress in SFM by:
 - a) Reducing duplication and redundancy within the existing strategic planning processes and consultation requirements.
 - b) Reducing industry, Government and community confrontation time and costs with community advocate groups by demonstrating how the community vision will be delivered for their local forest.
 - c) Developing a plan that acts as the:
 - i) Primary document, housed within the existing BC forest planning infrastructure that supports area-based management at a First Nations Territory, TSA, or TFL level.
 - ii) Guide to Land Based Investment Strategy (LBIS) prioritization of investments, silviculture treatments, research activities, forest inventory priorities and First Nations information sharing at a strategic level.
 - d) Providing the basis for other forest management requirements (e.g., TSR, third party certification, respecting First Nation values and interests, FSP, landscape level objectives, Land Use Plan updating and implementation, and conditions for timber sales).
 - e) Identifying areas where government policy changes and funding mechanisms would encourage innovation and assist in moving toward resilient and sustainable forests.
 - f) Building on lessons learned from previous and current pilots (e.g., Lignum IFPA and Integrated Stewardship Strategy Pilots).

- 3) Providing a working partnership mechanism to encourage the building of positive working relationships between licensees, First Nations and communities outside the legal consultation requirements.

Strategic Plan – Development Process

Principles

The BC forest requirements and community desires vary greatly across the Province. Consequently, the utilization of the Strategic Planning Framework requires flexibility when developing the plans (i.e., no one size fits all) to be consistent with the geographic, biologic and social/cultural conditions across the Province. However, there needs to be some consistency in developing the Strategic Plan to meet overall Provincial goals. The following principles are recommended to guide its development:

The Strategic Plan will:

- Be built through a collaborative technical process focusing on using forest management strategies, data and activities to produce a spatially and temporally explicit Strategic Plan.
- Encourage innovation, challenge the status quo, minimize/eliminate policy restrictions that prevent innovation.
- Include supportive science and/or expert opinion for variations from existing policy.
- Build on existing instruments and only build new instruments where critical gaps are identified.
- Utilize existing landscape units within management areas (e.g. First Nations Territory, TSA, TFL) and adjust to cover an ecologically defined management unit using watershed boundaries, where required.
- Use existing data and commit the participants to updating the data and knowledge base in priority areas over time and within available funding.
- Demonstrate explicitly, spatially (i.e., landscape unit) and temporally (e.g. 50-100yrs), movement toward a sustainable and resilient forest condition on a defined management area.
- Integrate forest management strategies and activities that:
 - o Identifies the risks associated with the balancing of ecological integrity goals with the achievement of socio-economic and cultural goals without jeopardizing the loss of basic ecological integrity or restoration potential.
 - o Identifies indicators and targets to meet these goals.
 - o Maintains or restores ecological integrity over time and space.
- Include a monitoring and adaptive management system to measure progress and adjust management practices to meet the stated goals and targets.
- Identify timber available for harvest as an output of scenario building rather than an input.
- Contain necessary information at the tactical level (i.e., landscape or multiple landscape units) to guide the development of a FSP or replace the FSP.

- Have the support of the First Nation on whose territory the plan is prepared, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources and Rural Development [MFLNRORD] District Manager and the major licensee(s) operating on the area.
- Be adequately funded for the planning and strategy development of the Strategic Plan.
- Be revised every 5 – 10 years.

Components

The effectiveness of the Strategic Planning Framework is dependent upon commitments by companies, Government and First Nations to collaboratively develop, implement and use the Strategic plan for decision-making in areas such as: operational forest management planning, FSP development and approvals, TSR and AAC determinations, TFL management plan, etc.).

As outlined in the Strategic Plan Framework graphic, the components are:

- **Land use plans** that identify land allocations and general management objectives and the land use interests or land use plan of the First Nations on whose territory, if a plan is available.
- **Vision** for what services and products will be delivered from the identified management area.
- **Goals** to achieve the vision.
- **Spatially and temporally explicit strategic plan** to guide operational plans within the defined management area.
- **Resource and knowledge data base** for use in strategic planning.
- **Operations plans** that deliver on the strategic plan.
- **Knowledge and data base gap** priorities to update and refine the Strategic Plan, including climate change scenarios.
- **Monitoring and adaptive management system** to assess progress to achieving the goals and providing information regarding required change in the Strategic Plan and operational activities.

Project Management Structure

It is expected the strategic planning will be conducted as a Technical Planning Team exercise with flexibility to adjust the Project Management structure to fit the local situation but within the principles outlined in the Strategic Planning Framework and with the commitments of the participating organizations. Normally, the major licensee or BC Timber Sales (BCTS) in the plan area will take the lead in organizing the Technical Planning Team and developing the Strategic Plan. However, this must be in collaboration with the appropriate Government agencies, First Nations and other major licensees in the area.

Obtaining periodic advice from the community is critical from the perspective of a regional community forest vision. In instances where the company has a third-party forest certification, the Community Advisory Group/Committee could be used for obtaining information on the values and interests, if a regional community forest vision does not exist. The general acceptance of the Strategic Plan by the Municipal Government politicians (the community) is important, if it is going to be used in guiding the

management of the regional forest. A recommended Project Management model that addresses this concern and retains the plan development as a technical exercise is outlined below.

1. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, consisting of senior people in the MFLNRORD District, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy [MECCS] Region, major tenure licensee(s) and BCTS operating in the defined management area, including the First Nations on whose territory the planning area is located.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are to:

- Provide guidance to the Technical Planning Team,
- Address policy issues relative to the planning exercise,
- Resolve issues where the Technical Planning Team cannot do so within,
- Update Regional Municipal Governments regarding the current status of the Strategic Plan development as an information item, and
- Review a recommended scenario and recommend adoption by the MFLNRORD, company senior management in the planning area and First Nations leadership to guide and measure performance of operational planning.

2. Technical Planning Team

The Technical Planning Team should be composed of representatives with local expertise from Government (i.e., MFLNRORD, MECCS), major forest licensees and BCTS operating in the defined management area and the First Nations whose territory in which the defined management area is located) and a consultant with the modeling software and experience in using it for this purpose.

The responsibilities of the Technical Planning Team are to:

- Develop the scenario(s) to meet the Strategic Plan Framework objective, principles and components, and
- Recommend a scenario to the Steering Committee.

3. Technical planning Facilitator

The technical process should be guided by a Facilitator familiar with this type of planning. The Facilitator will:

- Be the “keeper of the process,”
- Ensure the Technical Planning Team addresses the interests of all the Team members and the community regional forest vision in the scenario building,
- Communicate progress throughout the process to the Steering Committee in developing a recommended scenario, and
- Identify lessons learned and problems encountered though the process for communication to other strategic planning teams in the Province.