

**INTO THE DEEP BLUE**  
*Marine Ecosystem-based Management*

Coastal First Nations  
Turning Point Initiative

Our First Nations communities are leading the way in marine use planning, discussing key marine issues within our communities, and talking to our neighbours about what is important and why.

In 2002, Coastal First Nations-Turning Point Initiative (CFN-TPI) signed an agreement with Canada to develop a marine use planning process under Canada's Oceans Strategy. First Nations jointly began marine planning in 2005, along the BC coast, in an area called the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA).

The planning process was officially agreed to by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the Coastal First Nations and the North Coast-Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society in December 2008. The agreement creates a collaborative model for ocean governance that ensures the meaningful participation of First Nations in the development of management plans for marine use in PNCIMA.



We have always had a land and resource plan for our lands and oceans and the creatures they harbour. It lives in our heritage, in our oral history and in our everyday decisions as to where we collect our food, and where we fish and harvest our trees.

Our vision for our land and resources is based on respect and the best definition of the term "sustainable." To us this means the wealth of the forests, fish, wildlife and the complexity of all life will be here forever. It also means that we will be here forever.

*Kitasoo Land Use Plan, 2000*

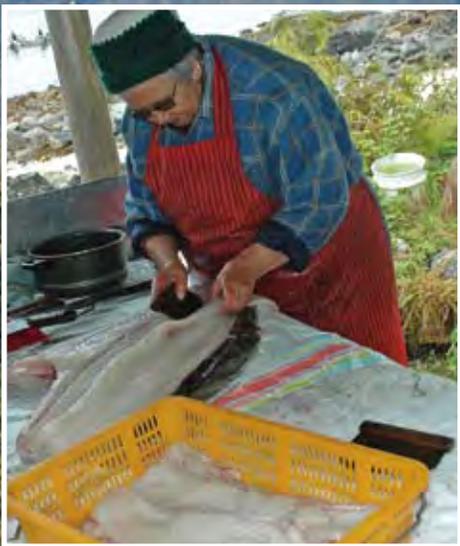
## PEOPLE OF THE LAND AND SEA

Coastal First Nations have been practicing 'ecosystem-based management' of the land and sea through countless generations stretching back more than 10,000 years. Our traditional resource management and enhancement practices sustain some of the richest cultures and societies on the planet.

Respect for the land, sea, spirit world, and all living things, is at the heart of our interactions with nature. The knowledge that "everything depends on everything else" tells us that the well-being of our communities is intricately tied to the well-being of the land and sea.

It is only in recent decades that this old way has become expressed in scientific terms called ecosystem-based management (EBM). In this last century, industrial-scale extraction of land and sea resources have depleted and threatened plants, animals and the places where they live. The management decisions that led to this depletion did not adequately consider impacts on the environment and relationships between plants and animals.

EBM expresses modern recognition of the need to consider ecosystems when managing for resource use – First Nations have known this for millennia. We have been and are again at the forefront of ecosystem-based land and sea resource management in our traditional territories.



## GOALS OF ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT

- Maintain and restore healthy, diverse and naturally resilient ecosystems
- Sustain human use of ecosystems over generations
- Ensure people have a fair share of the benefits from the ecosystems in which they live



## INFORMED BY TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Traditional knowledge (TK) from our elders and traditional resource harvesters plays a crucial role in informing our ecosystem-based marine planning.

Many aspects of TK, from ecological to cultural, are documented in our studies, including:

- Important places for fishing and gathering of different species
- ‘Seasonal rounds’ for specific places highlighting when different species are harvested
- Traditional ways of managing, and traditional ownership, of marine resources and areas
- Methods used in fishing, gathering and preparing foods
- Important cultural and archaeological sites
- Travel and trade routes for people, and migration routes for animals
- Spawning and rearing areas for different marine animals
- Observed changes, or trends, in species abundance and distribution over time

Traditional knowledge interviewers and marine planning staff in our communities ensure that this confidential information is used in sensitive and respectful ways.



# ETHICS AND VALUES

## PRINCIPLES OF FIRST NATIONS EBM

Ethics and values are the roots of traditional land and sea management systems. Although expressed in unique ways, First Nations ethics and values relate to scientific principles of EBM, and provide linkages between the two perspectives.

### FIRST NATIONS ETHICS AND VALUES & SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES

VALUES	PRINCIPLES
<b>RESPECT &amp; RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precautionary Approach</li> <li>• Inclusive and Participatory</li> </ul>
<b>BALANCE &amp; INTERCONNECTEDNESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term Sustainable Use</li> <li>• Integrated Management</li> </ul>
<b>INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptive Management</li> <li>• Best Information</li> </ul>
<b>GIVING AND RECEIVING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable Sharing</li> </ul>



## RESPECT & RESPONSIBILITY

Respect is about responsibility for the natural world. Decisions err on the side of caution to reduce risks to the well-being of animals, plants, people and places. People and governments provide leadership, open communication and cooperate to achieve common goals and ensure proper accountability. Respect requires recognition of First Nations title and rights to traditional territories, including the right to continue traditional practices, activities and marine uses. We are responsible to future generations in the decisions that we make today.

## BALANCE & INTERCONNECTEDNESS

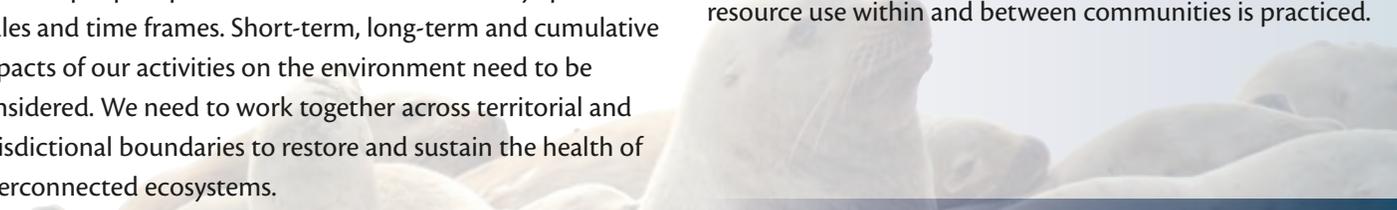
Balance is needed to sustain healthy communities within healthy ecosystems. Balance ensures fairness to future generations and sustains our cultures through time. Interconnectedness means accounting for the relationships between people, species and habitats, across many spatial scales and time frames. Short-term, long-term and cumulative impacts of our activities on the environment need to be considered. We need to work together across territorial and jurisdictional boundaries to restore and sustain the health of interconnected ecosystems.

## INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Within our communities, ‘listening to your elders’ speaks to the transfer of knowledge between generations. Sharing of culture and tradition teaches the value of specific places. Adaptive management expresses a similar concept that decisions be based on learning from past experiences. Good communication and use of best available information – traditional, local and scientific – are required to inform planning and decision-making. Effective monitoring and the ability to change management directions based on results of past actions, are important elements of EBM.

## GIVING AND RECEIVING

The act of giving thanks for ‘gifts’ received, or reciprocity, acknowledges both physical and spiritual connections to the natural world. Reciprocity recognizes the inherent value of all things and speaks to shared responsibility and community. Fair and equitable distribution of benefits from resource use within and between communities is practiced.

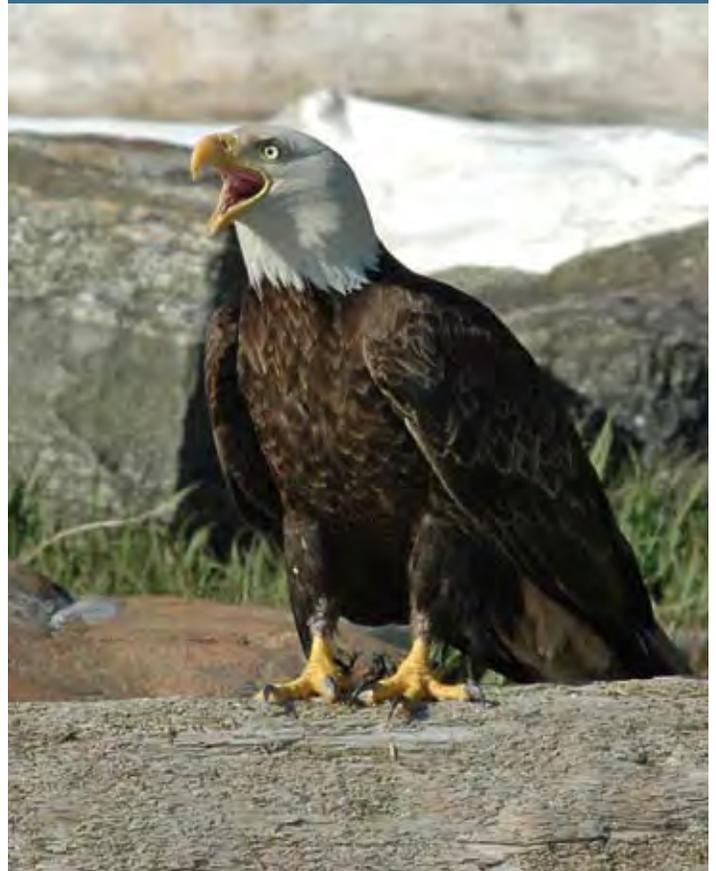


# APPLYING EBM IN MARINE PLANNING

First Nations on the North and Central Coasts of BC and on Haida Gwaii are at different stages of defining EBM and how it will be applied in marine planning within their traditional territories. Each coastal First Nations community may express definitions of EBM in different ways.

For example, the Council of the Haida Nation has created the following working definition of EBM for marine planning: Respect is the foundation of ecosystem-based management. It acknowledges that the land, sea, air and all living things, including the human community, are interconnected and that we have the responsibility to sustain and restore balance and harmony.

EBM will be the foundation for addressing many marine issues that are being discussed at community-based marine planning tables including fisheries sustainability, conservation, habitat protection, marine-based economic development, monitoring and enforcement.



Haida culture is intertwined with all of creation in the land, sea, air and spirit worlds. Life in the sea around us is the essence of our well-being, and so our communities and culture.

Yet here, as around the world, an insatiable human appetite is depleting the oceans. Some species are diminished or gone, and many habitats are impoverished.

We know that our culture depends on the sea around us, and that the well-being of every community and Nation is at risk. It is imperative that we bring industrial marine resource use into balance with, and respect for, the well-being of life in the sea around us.

We must take steps today to achieve a future with healthy intact ecosystems that continue to sustain Haida culture, communities, and an abundant diversity of life, for generations to come.

*Haida Marine Vision, Council of the Haida Nation, 2007*



## MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING

Considering ecosystem needs and human uses in an integrated way is a critical element of EBM. Recognizing that ecosystems are places means that EBM is place-based, and therefore marine spatial planning provides a means to implement EBM. Area zoning and designation of First Nations food fishing areas, marine conservancies, and multiple use areas are some of the tools that can be successfully applied in marine area management.

**Know our land and our natural world. It is our obligation to be stewards of the land and the living things on it. Never take or kill more than you need. Something has to be left for the future. Live to the rhythm of our annual cycle. Know the weather and the habits of living things. Never mistreat animals; a similar mistreatment comes back on you double.**

*Haisla Elders, 2006*

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

EBM can also be applied as management guidelines to address ecological, cultural and socio-economic issues and concerns.

In marine areas, we may specify guidelines to address:

- Ecological concerns, such as ensuring the integrity of sensitive coastal habitats including eel grass meadows, kelp forests, marine bird areas and herring spawning areas;
- Cultural concerns, such as limiting activities in marine areas adjacent to cultural and archaeological sites and spiritual sites; and
- Economic considerations, such as promoting activities that are consistent with the community's visions and values and regulating human activities that negatively impact the marine environment.

## LEADING MARINE PLANNING IN OUR TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES

As we continue to lead the way in ecosystem-based marine planning and implementation within our traditional territories, we will consider the many complex relationships between people, the land and the sea.

Our responsibility is to work together to ensure ecosystem health and restoration alongside social, cultural and economic well-being for our communities – for now and generations to come.



## FIRST NATIONS PARTICIPATING IN PNCIMA MARINE USE PLANNING

Each of the Nations is working with government and stakeholders to implement their integrated land use plan for their territorial land. Similar to marine use planning, the land use plans follow the principles of EBM. EBM in the marine environment is informed by and will compliment each Nation's land use plan.

### Central Coast First Nations

- Wuikinuxv
- Heiltsuk
- Kitasoo/Xai'Xais
- Nuxalk

### North Coast First Nations

- Metlakatla
- Gitga'at
- Haisla
- Kitselas
- Kitsumkalum
- Gitxaala

### Haida Gwaii

- Haida (Council of the Haida Nation with support of Skidegate and Massett)



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The information in this publication is primarily based on two existing documents:

- PNCIMA First Nations Area Technical Teams, 2008. **Linking British Columbia Coastal First Nations and Modern Perspectives on Ecosystem-Based Management**. Unpublished report produced in support of PNCIMA First Nations marine use planning, January 2008: 16pp.
- Council of the Haida Nation, 2007. **Ecosystem-based Management – A Basis for Haida Gwaii Marine Use Planning**. Unpublished document and accompanying EBM backgrounder produced in support of Haida marine planning, November 2007: 2pp + 3pp of background.

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To learn more about marine use planning in your community or to participate in the process contact your local planning team.

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# A Sea of Change



Integrated Marine Use Planning

**COASTAL FIRST NATIONS**

Turning Point Initiative

# Sea of Change: Coastal First Nations and Integrated Marine Use Planning

British Columbia's marine environment is among the most biologically diverse and pristine in the world. However, our oceans are in serious trouble.

The ocean's biodiversity and fish stocks are declining, climate change is altering BC's marine environment and potential developments such as offshore oil and gas present enormous threats to our marine environment.

In order to deal with these increasing development pressures, marine use plans are being developed for BC's Central and North Coast and Haida Gwaii. Our communities are committed to establishing sustainable levels of resource development and economic activity in our Traditional Territories while protecting the environment and biodiversity. The Coastal First Nations believe that maintaining, restoring and improving coastal ecosystems is crucial if we are to be self-sustaining.





## Turning Point receives funds from Federal Government and Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

The next few years will be ones of growth and challenges for our communities as we develop plans to manage our ocean and its resources.

The Coastal First Nations plans for marine use planning are ambitious but achievable. Without the support of the federal government and foundations, such as the Foundation, it would be difficult to achieve our goals.

The Foundation recently awarded Turning Point a grant to develop a marine use planning framework and process that addresses the interests of tripartite governments and stakeholders and enables the development of integrated marine use plans that lead to resilient and productive marine ecosystems. As well the funds will support the development of capacity within our communities through clear planning objectives and strategies, planning that is informed by adequate analysis and mapping capacity, and access to baseline ecological and socioeconomic information.

We embrace the opportunities and challenges presented by an increased role for our communities in marine use planning. We cannot achieve our goals by retaining the status quo. The coming years will be ones of growth and change as we move towards creating a healthy and sustainable coastal economy.

We greatly appreciate the support we've received from the Foundation. At the same time we will need the continued support and involvement of government and others to successfully complete the marine use planning process.



# Integrated Marine Use Planning

Integrated Marine Use Planning allows for the development of management plans for marine use. The key goals of marine use planning are to:

1. Promote improved ocean management decisions based on understanding ecological, cultural and socio-economic characteristics:
  - community and cultural values;
  - future uses and opportunities; and
  - existing management and institutional arrangements.
2. Design an integrated marine use plan that :
  - identifies shared values of the area, including environmental, economic, social and cultural values;
  - identifies information gaps and needs; and
  - results in ecosystem-based management.
3. Develop institutional arrangements which bring together governments, First Nations, user groups and other interests to enter into agreements on oceans management.
4. Contribute to the social, cultural, and economic well-being of First Nations, other coastal communities and stakeholders by identifying viable opportunities and development strategies.

## Background

The Coastal First Nations signed an agreement with Canada in 2002 to develop a marine use planning process that brings together the interests and principles of First Nations with Canada's Oceans Strategy. The federal oceans strategy was designed to change the way Canada manages its oceans and benefits from the oceans and resources. The federal strategy provides the framework through which government, First Nations, industry, and all Canadians can work together to ensure the sustainable use of ocean resources.

A joint Coastal First Nations/Canada marine use planning process was agreed to in-principle in 2005. Since this agreement was signed, First Nations in the Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) have been actively engaged in an integrated marine use planning process that integrates community values across multiple scales.





## What is PNCIMA and where is it located?

The Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) is one of five Large Ocean Management Areas (LOMAs) in Canada.

LOMAs are large marine areas with similar ecological characteristics including ocean temperatures, major currents, groupings of marine life and habitats that all support a variety of common biological processes and human activities.

The ecological criteria and the boundaries identified for PNCIMA have been developed by some of Canada's top scientists and have been validated by several independent science and technical associations as well as First Nations and environmental groups.

PNCIMA includes an area of about 88,000 square kilometres and extends to the Canada-Alaska border in the north; to Brooks Peninsula on northwest Vancouver Island; to Quadra Island and Bute Inlet in the south; and as far west as the base of the continental slope. The Federal Government selected PNCIMA as one of five LOMAs in Canada to pilot integrated management planning. Others include the Beaufort Sea, Eastern Scotian Shelf, Gulf of St. Lawrence and Placentia Bay/Grand Banks.



# First Nations Participation in the Marine Use Planning Process

Community involvement and participation in the marine planning process is essential to its success. The primary role of First Nations in this process is to protect and conserve the marine environment on behalf of its community members. However, First Nations can't do this alone. Integrated marine use planning is a process that brings together everyone that has an interest in the marine environment and integrates the wide variety of knowledge and interests into a common plan that meets the needs of all participants. These interests could include: First Nations; Federal and Provincial governments; coastal communities; non-governmental groups including environmental groups and community groups; and other interests such as fishermen, shipping companies, forestry and fishing companies, recreational groups, mining and energy groups.

There is growing recognition that First Nations have a unique relationship with, and knowledge of, local and regional marine environments. Canada's *Oceans Act* and *National Marine Conservation Areas Act* formally recognizes the value of traditional knowledge for marine use planning and management.

The marine use planning process allows First Nations to formally express to government and stakeholders their community interests and concerns about the marine area. There are many other reasons for First Nations to participate in marine use planning including:

- providing a strategic approach to marine use planning and management;
- supporting the information needed for decision-making and management with the wealth of traditional knowledge;
- identifying requirements for the long-term sustainability; and
- assessing the cumulative effects of marine developments and policies.

Community marine use plans will establish clear guidelines and best practices for activities occurring within our respective traditional territories. These will ensure that the communities' interests will be incorporated into future management decisions.

## First Nations Participating in Marine Use Planning

**Central Coast First Nations** currently involved are:

- Wuikinuxv Nation
- Heiltsuk Nation
- Kitsoo/XaiXais Nation
- Nuxalk Nation

**North Coast First Nations** currently involved are:

- Metlakatla Nation
- Gitga'at Nation
- Haisla Nation
- Lax Kw'alaams Nation
- Kitselas Nation
- Kitsumkalum Nation
- Gitxaala Nation

Marine planning in **Haida Gwaii** is being led by:

- Council of the Haida Nation with support of Skidegate and Massett





# First Nations Planning Process and Structures

## Community Planning Structures

First Nations planning processes and products will be developed by the communities for the communities. First Nation communities are currently involved at all levels of the marine use planning process. Communities are the primary drivers in the development of local and area-based marine plans. Marine planning committees/work groups have been established in each community or area and work on behalf of the community to develop marine plans that reflect the values and interests of the community as a whole. Communication strategies have been developed in order to ensure transparency in the process and to ensure community members play an active role. Some communications tools include community workshops, newsletters, open houses, and questionnaires.



## Area Technical Teams

The area technical teams are technical support bodies that have been established in the North Coast, Central Coast, and Haida Gwaii. Each consists of a biologist planner and a socio-economic planner.

The teams provide technical support, consultation with members of First Nations communities, and linkages into broader PNCIMA discussions. As well the teams provide support for communities in area-based PNCIMA meetings and processes with government agencies and stakeholders.



## Governance Structures

First Nations, federal and provincial government officials are currently reviewing a proposed process for overseeing and coordinating marine use planning activities. To lead the process, the following structures have been established:



- **Executive Steering Committee:** Primary link between broader government interests and processes and the PNCIMA governance process. As such it has the responsibilities for approving terms of reference and work plans for participants and staff.
- **First Nations Governance Committee:** Membership consists of a representative from each of the three areas, North Coast, Central Coast, and Haida Gwaii. The primary role of the First Nations governance committee is to provide guidance to the First Nations planning process and to seek advice from member communities and represent the values and interests of member communities on the Executive Steering Committee
- **PNCIMA Secretariat:** Responsible for overarching coordination across Coastal Management Areas (CMAs) and between the Large Ocean Management Area and CMAs. Responsibilities include provision/coordination of technical support, and ensuring consistent application of methodologies.



# Your Views Are Important

Strategic planning and integrated marine use planning are necessary for the long-term conservation, development and productivity of the marine environment.

Community members will have opportunities to take part in the development of marine use plans throughout the process. By taking part in the planning community members promote increased stability for marine resources, long-term protection of the marine environment; and create opportunities for a broad range of activities to be undertaken in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Your participation is essential if we are to achieve a marine use plan that reflects our values and interests. Community members are encouraged to visit their marine use planning teams to learn more about the process.

For more information please contact your elected First Nation representatives.

**Coastal First Nations - Turning Point Initiative** is an alliance of First Nations on British Columbia's North and Central Coast and Haida Gwaii working together to create a healthy coastal economy for our communities.

Turning Point's objective is to protect the land and marine resources in our Traditional Territories and to promote sustainable economic development in our communities.

The Coastal First Nations include Old Massett, Skidegate, Council of the Haida Nation, Metlakatla, Gitga'at, Haisla, Kitasoo/Xaixais, Heiltsuk, Wuikinuxv and Homalco.

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Photos by: Shirl Hall, Pam Brown, Bessie Brown  
Map: courtesy of Living Oceans Society

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