

# 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
- Kitasoo/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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