



Coast Forest Conservation Initiative

BC's Central and North Coast forests are ecologically significant in a local and global context. They also support nearby communities, where forestry on a small part of the land base has provided economic development for a hundred years.



An overview of the CFCI:

Industry collaboration with environmental groups; a new, science-based ecosystem approach to sustainable resource management

The Coast Forest Conservation Initiative is a collaborative effort begun in 1999 by five British Columbia forest companies committed to new approaches to forest conservation and management in one of the largest temperate rainforest areas in the world. The region covers some 75,000 squares kilometers (29,000 square miles) within the Central Coast, North Coast and Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands. It is home to more than 30,000 people, including 15 First Nations.

The companies are working closely with several environmental groups in a Joint Solutions Project (JSP). Its purpose is to support development of an ecosystem-based conservation and management plan for the region that fully integrates social, economic, cultural, and ecological needs. The initiative is part of a broader partnership with First Nations, local communities, the BC government, and forest workers to fully integrate social and economic considera-

tions with ecological protection in globally significant forests.

Key to this process is an independent team of scientists and other experts funded by government and the JSP. Working with a budget of \$3.2 million, the Coast Information Team is combining the latest scientific analysis, local and traditional knowledge, environmental expertise and community experience into practical strategies for improving social well being and economic returns while protecting ecological values. Following peer review, the CIT will forward its recommendations to participants in the provincial government and First Nations' regional land use planning processes.

BC's coastal forests have attracted global attention, while being critically important locally to the people who depend on them. An ecosystem-based approach integrates

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ecological protection with economically viable resource use. It will provide science-based assurance that the region's products originate from sustainable, well-managed forests.

Joint Solutions Project participants

Canadian Forest Products, ForestEthics, International Forest Products, Greenpeace, NorskeCanada, Rainforest Action Network, Western Forest Products, Sierra Club of BC, Weyerhaeuser

Key achievements

- ✘ Companies defer harvesting in the Central and North Coast, and environmental groups suspend market campaigns. The JSP is formed in January 2000 to develop an ecosystem-based management plan for the region.
- ✘ In April 2001, the BC government announces an historic agreement with First Nations and an interim land use plan for the Central Coast. It includes 20 large protection areas (441,000 hectares), bringing total area protected to 20 per cent of the region; and harvesting deferrals in "option areas" (534,000 hectares) until an ecosystem-based management plan is complete.
- ✘ A \$35-million sustainability trust is established to address impacts on workers, contractors and communities affected by protection areas and continued harvesting deferrals.

The region encompassed by the CFCI includes three sub-regions: the Central Coast, North Coast, and Haida Gwaii. The BC government has initiated public land use planning processes in these areas (referred to as Land and Resource Management Plans or LRMPs). LRMPs involve First Nations, local communities, business interests and resource users in developing consensus on land use and resource management objectives. CFCI work will input into this process.



- ✘ An independent science team is formed (the CIT) to develop new tools for ecosystem-based management funded by federal and provincial governments, forest companies and environmental groups.
- ✘ Operational trials of ecosystem-based management are initiated in cooperation with First Nations.
- ✘ A working group is established, funded by the BC government and conservation interests, to explore conservation investment and incentives for the region.

What's ahead

The CIT has more than eight major projects underway, scheduled for completion by December 31, 2003. The work will go to the public planning tables currently underway for the Central Coast, North Coast and Haida Gwaii to support final

land-use recommendations for these regions. Government-to-government discussions between the BC government and First Nations are scheduled to be complete by March 31, 2004.

CONTACTS



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Coast Forest Conservation Initiative

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