



## Coast Forest Conservation Initiative

This Central Coast harvest area is an example of variable retention logging. 1. Retained to help anchor soils on a steep bluff. 2. A variety of openings maintains structural diversity of the forest over time. 3. Adjacent leave area and riparian (streamside) protection reserve. 4. Wildlife tree patch anchored on a small creek. Streamsides often contain biologically diverse ecosystems. 5. Small retention patches for wildlife and varied stand structures. 6. Not currently economical to harvest by helicopter. 7. Irregular, natural edge is determined by local stand conditions. 8. Large riparian protection zone. 9. Prompt reforestation with trees suited to the site.



### Ecosystem-based management:

#### *Agreement on a definition, principles and goals to sustain socio-economic and natural systems*

In April 2001, First Nations, environmentalists, industry, government, and communities agreed on a new approach to manage resource use in the Central Coast, North Coast and Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands.

This new *ecosystem-based management* (EBM) approach is guided by an integrated set of principles, goals, objectives and procedures.

Its purpose is to ensure the sustainability of natural and socio-economic systems regionally, as well as recognize the aboriginal rights and title of First Nations.

A team of independent scientists and other experts is developing the tools to implement EBM. The level of analysis they are undertaking for this is unprecedented anywhere in the world.

Essentially, ecosystem-based management predicts and manages the effects of resource use on human and natural environments, to ensure the sustainability of both.

It considers impacts on regional and landscape levels, and it looks forward several decades.

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## A framework for EBM fully integrates ecological, cultural and socio-economic factors; some of the agreed to goals guiding the scientific work:

- x Healthy, fully functioning ecosystems provide the basis for sustaining communities, economies, cultures and the quality of human life; therefore ecological sustainability is fundamental to land and marine management.
- x Empowered and healthy communities play a leadership role in sustaining healthy ecosystems, cultures and economies.
- x Knowledge of natural processes and human interactions is incomplete and inherently limited, and decisions made in the present can pose unacceptable risks for the future. Apply the precautionary principle and practice adaptive management in decision-making.
- x Maintain natural, social and economic capital in the region and preserve the full range of options for future generations.
- x Respect aboriginal rights and title, and support government-to-government tables.
- x Sustain the biological richness and the biological services provided by natural terrestrial and marine processes at all scales through time (e.g. water quality, soils and vegetative productivity, species richness, predator/prey interactions).
- x A diversity of economic opportunities is key to healthy communities and sus-



An example of low-impact helicopter logging in the Central Coast. Heli-logging can be economical if timber volumes and values are sufficient.

tainable economies. Encourage diverse and innovative options that increase the employment, economic development, revenue, cultural and environmental amenities and other benefits derived from resources.

- x Recognize the social and economic impacts of change must be equitably addressed and promote community well being.

### Forestry changes underway

An ecosystem-based approach will guide all resource use activities in the region, from tourism and mining to forestry and fishing. Forest companies have already changed management practices in

anticipation of EBM. One of the most visible changes is the transition to small openings with irregular edges to fit the landscape.

In the photo example on the front page, fully 47 per cent of the 29.3-hectare harvested area has been retained, to maintain the legacy of the original forest.

This *variable retention* provides for wildlife corridors and habitat. It also maintains ecosystem functions through retention of decayed trees, patches of healthy timber and large debris scattered on the ground.

Essentially, forestry under ecosystem-based management results in a much *softer footprint* on natural ecosystems.

## CONTACTS



NEW THINKING ABOUT FOREST CONSERVATION

Coast Forest  
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