

**Ministry of
Environment and
Climate Change Strategy**

**2020/21 – 2022/23
SERVICE PLAN**

February 2020



Minister Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2020/21 - 2022/23 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. Heyman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
February 5, 2020

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy is responsible for the protection, management and conservation of British Columbia's water, land, air and living resources. It administers the province's parks and protected areas; monitors and enforces compliance with environmental laws and regulations; manages discharges to the environment from human activities; and protects B.C.'s biodiversity, ecosystems, native species and natural habitats. It mitigates and manages the risks and consequences from climate change, including developing plans to meet carbon pollution reduction targets; responds to the impacts of climate change; and oversees provincial environmental assessment through the Environmental Assessment Office. The ministry delivers services directly through staff based in regional offices across the province, as well as through partnerships and agreements with stakeholder groups, local governments, Indigenous peoples and the federal government.

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy delivers its mandate through several key pieces of environmental legislation including the *Environmental Management Act*, the *Integrated Pest Management Act*, the *Park Act*, the *Greenhouse Gas Industrial Reporting and Control Act*, the *Climate Change Accountability Act* and the *Environmental Assessment Act*. A full list of ministry legislation can be found at [BC Laws](#).

Strategic Direction

The Government of British Columbia remains focused on its three strategic priorities: making life more affordable, delivering better services and investing in a sustainable economy.

Ministries are actively working to provide quality, cost-effective services to British Columbia families and businesses. By adopting the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens and Business and Economic Implications Framework to budgeting and policy development, ministries will ensure that equity is reflected in budgets, policies and programs.

Additional key initiatives underpinning lasting prosperity in 2020/21 and beyond are the implementation of:

- A Framework for Improving British Columbians' Standard of Living which will provide the foundation for quality economic growth in our province and a pathway to a more inclusive and prosperous society,
- The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, demonstrating support for true and lasting reconciliation, and
- The CleanBC plan, putting B.C. on the path to a cleaner, better future – with a low carbon economy that creates opportunities while protecting our clean air, land and water.

The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) expects B.C.'s real GDP to grow by 2.4 per cent in 2020 and 2.3 per cent in 2021. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC projects national real GDP growth of 1.7 per cent in 2020 and 1.8 per cent in 2021. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to outperform Canada's in the coming years. Risks to B.C.'s economic outlook include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies and weak global economic activity, as well as lower commodity prices and slower domestic economic growth. Meanwhile, LNG development in the province is expected to have a positive impact on B.C.'s economy.

This 2020/21 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy will support the government's priorities, including selected action items identified in the July 2017 Minister's [Mandate Letter](#). Over the previous fiscal year, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy made progress on these priorities by:

- Launching public engagement on the [Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy](#) to receive feedback from British Columbians on setting climate priorities as committed within the CleanBC plan
- Leading the all-of-government implementation of the CleanBC plan and developing further economic, energy and climate policies and actions under the plan to fulfill CleanBC's economic and climate objectives
- Launching the [Plastics Action Plan Policy Consultation Paper](#) and public engagement survey to seek feedback on action in four connected areas to reduce plastic pollution and use less plastic overall with plans to release a What We Heard Report in spring 2020 and to develop appropriate policy and regulatory responses and timelines
- Implementing a revitalized environmental assessment process by bringing the *Environmental Assessment Act* fully into force. The new environmental assessment process will enhance public confidence, advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and protect the environment while offering clear pathways to sustainable project approvals
- Conducting engagement on species at risk legislation with Indigenous peoples, stakeholders and citizens, and defining key areas for focused policy work to better support positive outcomes for species at risk
- Continuing to foster a culture of reconciliation and learning within the ministry through the establishment of a dedicated team that is creating educational opportunities, tools and resources to support building lasting partnerships with Indigenous peoples

The following performance plan outlines how the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy will continue to track progress on key mandate letter commitments and other emerging government priorities.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Effective protection and conservation of the environment

The ministry works to protect the environment by managing environmental risks to B.C.'s water, land and air. On the conservation side, the ministry works to assess, set priorities and determine actions for the conservation and recovery of plants, ecosystems and animals, which includes taking steps to bring in environmental mitigation and offsetting across the natural resource sector, as well as additional mechanisms to protect species at risk. Protection and conservation are supported by actions to continually improve the systems that govern natural resource decision making and the sustainable use of B.C.'s natural capital.

Objective 1.1: Clean and safe water, land and air

Key Strategies:

- Continuing the development of a comprehensive provincial environmental emergency (spill response) framework, including new regulatory requirements
- Providing provincial leadership in municipal solid waste reduction through the Plastics Action Plan, mandatory regional solid waste management plans, promotion of organics recycling and initiatives for the prevention of food and plastic waste
- Performing ongoing oversight and continuous improvement of mandatory extended producer responsibility programs

Performance Measure	2015/16 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.1a Per capita municipal solid waste disposal (kg per person) ¹	497	375	350	350	350
1.1b Per cent of population covered by an organic waste disposal restriction ²	64.3%	75%	75%	75%	80%

¹ Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, manually compiled. 2019/20 per capita forecast informed by 2018 calendar year data.

² Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, manually compiled.

Linking Performance Measures to Objective:

Managing municipal solid waste minimizes environmental impacts by supporting sustainable land management practices, reducing plastic pollution, improved air and water quality and greenhouse gas reductions. Diverting organic waste from landfills contributes to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and enables processing of organic matter into beneficial products such as nutrient-rich compost.

Objective 1.2: Healthy and diverse ecosystems, native species and habitats

Key Strategies:

- Providing provincial leadership in species listing and mitigation policy work to help inform the federal evaluation of the existing *Species at Risk Act*

- Setting objectives and leading strategic planning for biodiversity, conservation, species recovery and management, including in parks and protected areas
- Delivering conflict reduction education, outreach and programs such as Bear Smart Communities and WildSafeBC
- Managing parks and protected areas for ecological representation; biodiversity; landscape connectivity; and increasing Indigenous cultural and interpretive presence

Performance Measure	2017/18 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.2 Number of protected area complexes ¹ with completed conservation assessments ²	0	1	1	2	3

¹ Protected area complexes are clusters of protected areas larger than 2,700km² in size which are capable of maintaining populations of disturbance-sensitive mammals.

² Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, manually compiled. Targets are cumulative.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The health of B.C.'s protected areas system is measured by assessing a range of conservation values such as the presence of invasive species, how vulnerable the park is to climate risks and the effects of human activity. Conservation assessments are a pilot action as part of the ministry's strategy to effectively manage parks and protected areas for biodiversity, landscape connectivity and other important values.

Discussion:

The targets for this performance measure were revised from the previous service plan as the ministry has determined through the first assessment that there is more work required to refine and deliver these assessments in a fully effective manner, which means the timelines are longer than originally anticipated.

Objective 1.3: Sustainable use of British Columbia's natural capital

Key Strategies:

- Continually improving regulatory oversight with an ongoing emphasis on inspections of higher risk sites, including mines and commercial sites
- Optimize outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities within parks and protected areas

Performance Measure	2014/15 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.3 Number of inspections conducted under the <i>Environmental Management Act</i> ¹	711	2000	2000	2000	2000

¹ Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, manually compiled. Inspections (in office reviews and on-site examinations) conducted under the act and associated regulations.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Ministry staff conduct inspections under the *Environmental Management Act* to determine compliance with regulatory requirements. Compliance inspections are integral to the ministry's responsibility for environmental regulatory oversight.

Goal 2: A sustainable, resilient low-carbon economy

The ministry works to reduce carbon pollution while developing and implementing measures that will create clean and diverse economic growth.

Objective 2.1: Implement a climate action strategy that provides a pathway for B.C. to prosper economically while significantly reducing our carbon pollution

Key Strategies:

- Implementing actions under CleanBC to meet the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets legislated under the *Climate Change Accountability Act* by:
 - Actioning further amendments to the *Climate Change Accountability Act*
 - Establishing a diverse Advisory Council in Legislation
 - Publishing the first annual accountability report to the Legislature
 - Introducing an interim greenhouse gas (GHG) target and sectoral GHG targets
- Supporting the Ministry of Finance to implement annual increases to the carbon tax until it reaches \$50 t/CO₂e in 2021
- Continuing to work with the Business Council of British Columbia to develop a low carbon industrial strategy

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.1 CleanBC ¹ implementation ²	Release CleanBC	Begin phased implementation of CleanBC to meet 75% of 2030 target and transition to low-carbon economy	For the remaining 25% of 2030 target - begin/continue to implement policies modelled to achieve 30% of target	For the remaining 25% of 2030 target - begin/continue to implement policies modelled to achieve 50% of target	For the remaining 25% of 2030 target - begin/continue to implement policies modelled to achieve 60% of target

¹ [CleanBC](#) is the province's plan to reduce carbon pollution and use clean energy to create new opportunities across the province to power and strengthen B.C.'s economy.

² Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, manually compiled.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Implementation of CleanBC will position the province to prosper economically while meeting its carbon pollution reduction goals.

Discussion:

The performance measure targets have been revised since the 2019/20-2021/22 Service Plan to reflect that a staged approach to implementation is necessary in a 12-year plan. The new targets align the ministry's service plan with the implementation plan for CleanBC. The former performance targets were developed prior to the development of an implementation plan for CleanBC. Under the new *Climate Change Accountability Act*, detailed annual reports will be tabled to the Legislature that outline the latest emissions data and projections, as well as actions and expenditures planned for future years and the effect they are expected to have.

Objective 2.2: Effective management of the risks and consequences associated with a changing climate

Key Strategies:

- Consult with Indigenous people and other British Columbians on the development of a new Provincial Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy that will support a thriving and healthy province that is resilient to a changing climate
- Incorporate Indigenous perspectives into the Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment that was released in July 2019
- Apply and pilot the risk assessment methodology set out in the Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment to regional and ministry programs
- Develop a climate risk reporting program for the public sector that meets the requirements of the *Climate Change Accountability Act*

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.2 Provincial Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy developed and implemented ¹	N/A	N/A	100% developed	30% of the Provincial Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy implemented	50% of the Provincial Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy implemented

¹ Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, manually compiled.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

This performance measure tracks progress in establishing a government-wide approach to identifying and managing climate risks to British Columbia.

Discussion:

This revised performance measure addresses a commitment in CleanBC to develop in collaboration with Indigenous peoples a provincial climate adaptation strategy by 2020. The new measure aligns the ministry’s service plan with a key deliverable of CleanBC. The former performance measure was developed prior to the CleanBC commitment.

Goal 3: Thorough, timely, transparent and impartial environmental assessments

The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) has implemented a revitalized environmental assessment process that ensures the legal rights of Indigenous nations¹ are respected and the public's expectation of a thorough, timely, transparent and impartial process are met. This includes collaborating with Indigenous nations in relation to reviewable projects, consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The new *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) offers clear pathways to sustainable project approvals and promotes sustainability by protecting the environment and fostering a sound economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities.

¹ The use of ‘Indigenous nations’ is the term used in the *Environmental Assessment Act (2018)* and refers to the Aboriginal peoples of Canada as referred to in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

British Columbia has also signed a new cooperation agreement with the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, setting out the administrative framework that supports jurisdictions working together to achieve “one project; one assessment” and ensuring that projects requiring both federal and provincial assessments are conducted as efficiently as possible. Federal and provincial ministers will continue to make independent decisions on whether to issue an Environmental Assessment Certificate.

Objective 3.1: Implement the revitalized environmental assessment process

Key Strategies:

- Start conducting environmental assessments under the new EAA with Phase 1 regulations and policies including modern compliance and enforcement tools
- Develop Phase 2 and 3 regulations, policies and guidance materials with input from Indigenous nations, industry and key stakeholders to support the phased implementation of the EAA
- Support EAO staff, proponents, practitioners, government reviewers, Indigenous nations, local government and the public with learning and development to effectively participate in reviews under the new EAA
- Coordinate across governments to ensure the EAO’s new practices and ongoing project work reflect effective implementation of the new cooperation agreement with the Government of Canada
- Negotiate government-to-government strategic agreements with Indigenous peoples and other federal agencies to support efficient environmental assessment processes, and establish a committee between Canada, British Columbia and Indigenous leaders to support successful implementation of the new federal and provincial acts.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.1 <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> phased implementation ¹	N/A	Phase 1 Regulations and/or policies necessary to bring act into force and be operational	Phase 2 Regulations and/or policies that enhance functionality of the act	Phase 3 Regulations and/or policies that complete functionality of the act	Conduct interim review of revitalized EA process

¹ Data Source: Environmental Assessment Office, manually compiled.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The passage of regulations and development of policies linked to environmental assessment revitalization is a key action in order to implement the new environmental assessment process.

Discussion:

The performance measure and targets were based on the previous service plan and reflect new information in respect of the phased work and timelines necessary to implement the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2019/20 Restated Estimates ¹	2020/21 Estimates ²	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Environmental Protection	13,314	12,935	13,343	13,343
Environmental Sustainability	23,622	22,669	22,896	22,896
BC Parks	41,567	40,682	40,892	40,892
Conservation Officer Service	19,244	19,014	19,254	19,254
Climate Action	14,849	12,883	12,947	11,706
Clean BC Program for Industry	55,352	55,365	55,386	55,386
Executive and Support Services	24,786	24,584	24,606	24,546
Sub-Total	192,734	188,132	189,324	188,023
Park Enhancement Fund	9,800	9,000	9,000	9,000
Sustainable Environment Fund	25,929	26,032	26,135	26,135
Total	228,463	223,164	224,459	223,158
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	22,837	24,521	20,092	20,092
Park Enhancement Fund	400	400	400	400
Total	23,237	24,921	20,492	20,492
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)				
Climate Action Greenhouse Gas Emissions offsets				
Disbursements	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Net Cash (Requirements)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Total Disbursements	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Net Cash Source (Requirements)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 Estimates.

² Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Resource Summary: Environmental Assessment Office

Core Business Area	2019/20 Restated Estimates ¹	2020/21 Estimates	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Environmental Assessment Office	14,531	14,712	15,322	15,322
Information, Innovation and Technology	6,357	6,770	7,070	7,070
Total	20,888	21,482	22,392	22,392

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 Estimates.

Appendix A: Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Tribunals

Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council

The Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council (the Council) was created in October 2017 and completed its term in October 2019. During its two years of operation, the Council's mandate was to provide advice to government on actions and policies that can contribute to carbon pollution reductions and optimize opportunities for sustainable economic development and job creation. The Council was a key advisor on the development of CleanBC in 2018 and its subsequent implementation in 2019. A new advisory council is being established in 2020 to meet the requirements of the *Climate Change Accountability Act*.