

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report

August 2023



For more information on the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, please
contact us at:

PO BOX 9335
STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, B.C.
V8W 9M1

1-800-663-7867

Or visit our website at: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/env>

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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan published in 2022. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. Heyman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
August 11, 2023

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Letter from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report. Over the past year, ministry actions have continued to reflect our government's commitment to meet our legislated greenhouse gas reduction targets, advance climate resilience and protect B.C.'s natural environment. To facilitate these objectives and further our shared goals of reconciliation, environmental sustainability, and economic growth, we reorganized the natural resource ministries under a common vision. We also welcomed David Eby as B.C.'s new Premier, who established cabinet and ministry changes, as well as new mandate letters. These changes reinforced our focus on making life better for people in B.C. – now and in the future.

This included the release of the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy to improve B.C.'s resilience in the face of more frequent climate change impacts. It relies on targeted actions to ensure our communities, economy, and infrastructure are ready for climate change while safeguarding the ecosystems that support us all. Collaboration with Indigenous Peoples is essential to the strategy, including partnerships with First Nations that integrate Indigenous knowledge, and respond to the unique impacts on their territories, values, and ways of life.

As we planned for future climate-related events, work continued to clear the debris from the 2021 flooding thanks to record investments and cross-ministry response. A coordinated approach with First Nations and local governments has been central to this effort.

Despite the realities of a changing climate, B.C. continued to be a destination for people wanting to experience its natural beauty. Our investments in BC Parks strengthened park management, improved existing parks, and enabled plans for new ones. We launched a new BC Parks reservation service, allowing easy booking and access to thousands of great camping opportunities provincewide. More than 317,000 reservations were made using the new service for the 2022 season – an increase of 26.5% since 2019.

The Kitasoo Xai'xais and Nuxalk First Nations, along with BC Parks, signed an agreement to develop a shared compliance and enforcement pilot program within provincial protected areas in both Nations' territories. A first for B.C., the project will grant select Indigenous Guardians the same legal authorities as BC Parks rangers. It recognizes the importance of meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and the vital environmental stewardship expertise they bring from millennia of traditional knowledge and practice.

These are just a few examples from the past year of how ministry staff are collectively building a more prosperous, sustainable future for everyone.



Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
August 11, 2023

Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the [Budget Transparency and Accountability Act](#) (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2020 and Minister George Heyman's 2020 [Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

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 and recreation sites and trails; 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 in parks and protected areas. It acquires, manages, and analyzes environmental and climate data to provide a robust platform for decision-making across the province. 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 First Nations, local governments, the federal government, and stakeholder groups.

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy delivers its mandate through several key pieces of environmental legislation or portions thereof 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, the Forest and Range Practices Act, the Wildlife Act, and the Environmental Assessment Act. A full list of provincial legislation can be found at [BC Laws](#).

Operating Environment

At the beginning of the fiscal year 2022/23, the natural resource ministries were restructured and a new ministry (Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship) was created to oversee better stewardship and management of B.C.'s land and resources. As a result of this restructuring, Recreation Sites and Trails was moved into the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, while the Water Protection and Sustainability and Ecosystems branches were moved from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. Staff at the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy supported the transition of files to the new ministry.

The ministry continued to dedicate resources to the cleanup of debris from the November 2021 atmospheric river event, requiring some reallocation of resources from other program areas. The atmospheric river event also had lasting impacts on BC Parks, including significant damage to local access roads, park trails, tunnels, and bridges in several parks.

BC Parks and Recreation Sites and Trails also continued to manage increasing public use of recreational infrastructure. A record number of people made reservations for campsites, day-use passes, backcountry permits, cabins and picnic shelters in provincial parks this year. While this is encouraging, the increase in visitors has resulted in challenges that must be managed by staff, including: crowding and traffic concerns; visitor safety concerns; and the potential for damage to cultural and ecological values.

Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

Goal 1: Effective protection and conservation of the environment

Objective 1.1: Clean and safe water, land, and air

The ministry works to protect the environment by managing risks to B.C.'s water, land, and air. It does this by setting robust regulatory requirements; responding to pollution incidents; verifying compliance and taking enforcement action where required; and evaluating environmental quality through air and water monitoring and assessment.

Key results

- Undertook field response and recovery actions for 133 reported spills to ensure spillers were taking corrective actions to recover the environment.
- Provided \$215,000 in Indigenous Funding Program (IFP) funds to First Nations for pre-spill government to government capacity building; environmental emergency responses activities such as shoreline cleanup and After-action Reviews; and cultural heritage overview assessments following the 2021 atmospheric river event.
- Awarded over \$4M to six new organics infrastructure and collections programs under the Organics Infrastructure Program and Organics Infrastructure and Collections Program.
- Increased B.C.'s capacity to process and use recycled plastic by 20,000 tonnes per year through the [first phase of the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund](#).
- Removed 1,500 tonnes of marine debris, including 118 derelict vessels, from more than 4,600 kilometers of B.C.'s shoreline through the Clean Coast, Clean Waters Fund, with 64% of collected materials being recycled or upcycled.

Summary of progress made in 2022/23

The ministry continued development of a comprehensive provincial environmental emergency (spill response) framework this year, including partnering with First Nations. First Nations have indicated that rapid notification of potential or imminent emergency incidents that threaten their territories is critically important. Awareness of an incident enables early participation in decision-making and ensures timely communication of information necessary to protect the health and safety of their community. The ministry has developed an automated notification tool called Alertable which is being tested by 12 partner First Nations.

In October 2022, the ministry released a discussion paper for Making Contaminated Sites Climate Ready that detailed ideas to improve remediation effectiveness at contaminated sites vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The paper was designed to promote discussion and gain feedback to help inform effective policy solutions. A total of 31 responses were

received from First Nations, various levels of government, environmental professionals, developers, industry, and other parties. Seven Indigenous engagement sessions were conducted between November and December 2022. Over 90 individual First Nations and Indigenous organizations participated in these sessions.

The ministry also expanded policies to reduce municipal solid waste through regional solid waste management plans, promotion of organics recycling, and food and plastic waste prevention initiatives. In April 2022, the Preventing Single-use and Plastic Waste in British Columbia intentions paper (IP) was released to identify actions to regulate the use of certain single-use and plastic items. The IP outlined a proposed waste prevention regulation that would regulate checkout bags, disposable foodservice accessories, and problematic plastics.

As of January 2023, single-use plastic items and packaging products are accepted in residential blue box programs or participating recycling depots. This expanded list of new materials captured under the Recycling Regulation allows more material to be recycled, keeping it out of landfills and reducing littering.

The second and third phases of the CleanBC Plastics Action Fund were initiated in 2022-23, with an additional \$35M to further support innovative plastic waste reduction projects across the province, promoting the development of [a circular economy in B.C.](#)

Performance measures and related discussion

Performance Measures	2015/16 Baseline	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Forecast
1.1a Per capita municipal solid waste disposal (kg per person) ^{1,5}	497	506 ²	460	500 ³
1.1b Per cent of population covered by an organic waste disposal restriction ^{2,6}	64.3%	75%	80%	77%
		2021/22 Baseline	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
1.1c Actions ⁴ implemented to support the phase-out of single-use plastics ⁶				
Provincial actions		0	5	11
Local government actions		5	30	58

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

¹Kg per person data is based on the calendar year, so 2021/22 target is based on calendar year 2021, 2022/23 target is based on calendar year 2022, etc.

²In the 2021/2022 Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy Annual Service Plan Report, 500 kg was reported as a forecast, and has been updated to 506 kg from the actual data reported.

³Figures for 2022/23 are estimated; actual result will be confirmed in November 2023 and published in the 2023/24 Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy Annual Service Plan Report.

⁴An action is defined as a single policy/regulation/bylaw addressing a single item or plastic type. For example, a ban on single-use plastic checkout bags and a ban on polystyrene foam take-out containers count as two actions. A strategy to phase out single-use plastics consists of several necessary actions.

⁵PM 1.1a targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 440 and 420, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

⁶PM 1.1b and 1.1c were removed in the latest service plan. For more details on forward-looking planning information, including the performance measures and targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

1.1a) The per capita municipal solid waste disposal rate is an estimate of how many kilograms (kg) of solid waste one person sends to a landfill or other disposal site in a given calendar year. The data for this performance measure becomes available to the Province from the regional districts one year after the annual publication of this Annual Service Plan Report (ASPR). Figures for the current ASPR year (in this case, calendar year 2022) are estimated; actual results will be confirmed in November of the following year (2023) and then published in the subsequent ASPR. The higher than target estimate for 2022 takes into account increased waste generation from disaster-related debris resulting from the 2021 atmospheric river event and associated flooding, as well as continued increases in disposal from the construction and demolition sector.

For calendar year 2021, the overall provincial disposal rate was 506 kg/person, an increase of 7 kg/person from the previous year (2020), and above the target disposal rate. In 2021, some regional districts reported increased waste generation due to increases in building demolition and renovation waste. B.C. continues to focus on waste prevention and a circular economy to enable future progress towards lower disposal rates. New provincial initiatives are being introduced to decrease waste disposal rates including organics diversion infrastructure, food waste prevention, the CleanBC Plastics Action Plan, approval of updated extended producer responsibility (EPR) program plans, and the expansion of EPR programs through the five-year plan.

1.1b) Although the percentage of the population covered by an organic waste ban increased from 75% to 77% in 2022, this was below the target of 80%. This target is impacted by extensions in timelines that have occurred for developing new organics programs under the Organic Infrastructure Program (OIP) and the Organic Infrastructure and Collections Program (OICP). The extensions were provided to funding recipients to mitigate the impacts from delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, significant worker shortages and inflation. Increases in the percent population covered by an organic waste ban are expected in coming years following the implementation of new organics diversion programs under the OIP and OICP.

1.1c) Provincial Actions: Since 2021, the Province has completed 11 actions to support the phase-out of single-use plastics, including:

- Enabling municipal authority to ban certain single-use plastics without the need for Minister approval;
- Enabling provincial authority to ban single-use plastic products (in addition to packaging);
- Amending the Recycling Regulation to increase capture of single-use plastics, to establish a deposit-refund for milk and milk-alternative containers, and to harmonize deposits (10 cents for all containers, irrespective of size);

- Funding three intakes (2021, 2022, 2023) of the Plastics Action Fund totaling \$40M, for projects that recycle and remanufacture recycled plastics and/or that support plastic waste reduction through business models that support reuse, refill, sharing or repairing opportunities; and,
- Funding three intakes (2021, 2022, 2023) of the Clean Coast, Clean Waters Initiative Fund totaling \$50M, to remove derelict vessels and marine debris, including single-use plastics, from the marine environment.

Local Government Actions: To date, 21 municipalities have implemented by-laws prohibiting one or more types of single-use plastic; totaling 58 bans ("actions") in B.C.

Objective 1.2: Support healthy and diverse protected areas, native species, and habitats

The ministry manages the province's protected areas to maintain ecological integrity, minimize biodiversity loss and preserve resilient natural spaces in the face of climate change. It also promotes shared environmental stewardship and collaborative partnerships with First Nations.

Key results

- Established a new conservancy in a portion of the Incomappleux Valley south of Revelstoke, covering 58,654 hectares. This project was enabled by a partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Interfor Corporation and protects old growth forest stands in the inland temperate rainforest.
- Enacted legislation in spring 2022 to add lands to 10 existing parks as the result of a mix of private land acquisitions and Crown land additions.
- Established a first-of-its-kind pilot project, establishing a process to grant Indigenous Guardians from the Kitsoo Xai'xais and Nuxalk First Nations the same legal authorities as BC Parks rangers.
- Developed a framework for permanent regulatory changes to ban the widespread sale and use of second-generation rodenticides. The revised Integrated Pest Management Regulation came into effect on January 21, 2023.

Summary of progress made in 2022/23

The creation of the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship in April 2022 meant that some of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's mandate in relation to this objective transitioned to the new ministry. Over the last fiscal year, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has focused on meeting the elements of this objective that are still relevant within its adjusted mandate, particularly within protected areas, with the support of the Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship and others. The BC Parks Licence Plate program, in particular, provides opportunity to invest in projects with partners that contribute to delivering on this objective within protected areas.

Performance measure and related discussion

With the changes to the ministry's operations brought forth by the creation of the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy removed the performance measure related to this objective and will be exploring a new performance measure that better reflects the work of this ministry.

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

The ministry seeks to protect natural and healthy environments and ecosystems, while helping steward sustainable use of B.C.'s natural capital, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, and supporting our reconciliation commitments to Indigenous Peoples. The ministry also seeks opportunities to continually improve the systems that govern natural resource decision-making.

Key results

- Renovated Maquinna Marine Provincial Park replacing the aging two-kilometer trail through old-growth rainforest to the hot pools in partnership with the Ahousaht Nation. The project provided for better land and water stewardship, as well as opportunities for tourism and employment.
- Delivered new trail and accessibility upgrades at Rathtrevor Beach and Miracle Beach Provincial Parks, 16 kms of new (formalized) trail at Gowlland Tod Provincial Park, and 50 new tent pads and other infrastructure upgrades at Juan de Fuca Provincial Park through the Recreation Expansion Project.
- Collaborated with First Nations on projects to better reflect First Nation histories and cultures in provincial parks and protected areas, such as recording and posting pronunciation audio clips for Muqwin and Hisnit parks; creating a video with the Kyuquot and Checlesheht First Nations to post to the 10 webpages of the parks and protected areas within their territories; and installing the Simpcw interpretive trail at Mt. Robson Park.
- Brought into force amendments to the Environmental Management Act and Protocol 19 (Site Investigation Protocol), including new requirements for relocation of re-usable soil from commercial/industrial sites. The changes to soil relocation help streamline the legal regime, making the process clearer and more transparent and improve the ministry's ability to carry out compliance verification and enforcement.
- Launched the Soil Relocation Information System (SRIS), an online map tool that displays all locations where qualifying soil has been moved to and from, as well as high-volume receiving sites.

Summary of progress made in 2022/23

In addition to the completed recreation expansion projects noted above, a further 30 projects got underway or were in progress in 2022/23 to add new campsites, new day-use opportunities and new and renewed trail. These projects will be completed in future years and are part of the \$21.5M Recreation Expansion Mandate Project.

BC Parks continues to lead work with the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation to co-develop and implement recommendations to better reflect Indigenous Peoples' histories and cultures in provincial parks and protected areas as a component of BC Parks' broader efforts towards reconciliation. In addition to the examples listed above, BC Parks is working with Skwłax te Secwepemculecw to construct a C7istkteń (pit house, also known as winter home) in Tsútswecw Park. The C7istkteń winter home will serve as a cultural connection point for community members and offer the opportunity for education and engagement for the public. Anticipated completion of the C7istkteń winter home is set for 2023.

The ministry continued work on a Public Interest Bonding Strategy to ensure high-risk industrial facilities are bonded moving forward for foreseen cleanup costs related to industrial activities, upholding the polluter-pay principle. The first phase of the Public Interest Bonding Strategy intends to put the legal framework in place to require cleanup plans and financial assurance from responsible parties. Ongoing engagement on the Public Interest Bonding Strategy discussion paper included webinars for Indigenous communities to provide feedback on the themes and outcomes of the discussion paper. Webinars were also completed with the public and stakeholders to collect a wide range of perspectives and feedback. Two What We Heard reports were produced, the first on Indigenous feedback and the second on broader public and stakeholder input.

Performance measures and related discussion

Performance Measures	2014/15 Baseline	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
1.3a Number of inspections conducted under the <i>Environmental Management Act</i> and <i>Integrated Pest Management Act</i> ^{1,3}	711	1,142	1,200	915
1.3b Number of completed contaminated sites services applications ³	256 ²	N/A	350	670

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

¹Inspections (in office reviews and on-site examinations) conducted under the *Environmental Management Act* and *Integrated Pest Management Act* and associated regulations.

²Although the performance measure for 1.3b is new this year, baseline data from 2014/15 is included for consistency with performance measure 1.3a.

³PM 1.3a and 1.3b were removed in the latest service plan. For more details on forward-looking planning information, including the performance measures and targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the the [BC Budget website](#).

1.3 a) The ministry takes a risk-based approach to conducting inspections under the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) and *Integrated Pest Management Act* (IPMA). The ministry conducted 915 inspections in 2022/23, falling short of its goal of 1,200. The average number of inspections per inspector in 2022/23 was 39.2. In the 2022/23 fiscal year, there were 3.2 fewer inspectors than the previous year conducting and writing inspections (averaged throughout the year), which contributed significantly to the reduced overall number of inspections.

The ministry's risk-based approach is a structured inspection prioritization process that incorporates a wide range of factors including the type of activity and discharge being regulated and the compliance history of the regulated party. Prioritization of planned inspections is conducted annually for sites and individuals regulated under the EMA and IPMA. This process ensures we are focusing our resources on sites with the highest environmental risk, and often means the inspections being conducted are more complex and require more time to complete. In addition to planned inspections, the ministry responded to over 1,100 complaints, conducted sector-based audits, issued pollution related orders, and adjudicated administrative penalties.

Five sector audits were conducted in 2022/23, which play an important role in promoting awareness of regulatory requirements and supports a level playing field within a sector.

As part of the ministry's risk-based policy and escalating enforcement, 106 administrative penalties were issued totaling over \$18M in the 2022/23 fiscal year (76 administrative penalties totaling \$2.2M were issued in 2021/22), with mining, agriculture and municipal sewage sectors receiving 60% of the total penalties issued. Inspector time is needed to prepare administrative penalty packages, which also contributes to a reduction in overall inspection totals but ensures sites with the poorest compliance history or highest environmental risk are being held accountable. This is an important approach to achieve the overarching goal of changing non-compliant behaviour.

1.3 b) The ministry's Land Remediation Section (LRS) is responsible for the regulatory oversight of the remediation and redevelopment of contaminated sites in B.C. LRS reviews applications for services to ensure lands meet regulated standards for contaminants and are safe for human and ecological receptors.

LRS processed almost double the targeted number of contaminated sites services applications this year. This success is directly correlated with the addition of 12 new full-time staff in the 2022/23 fiscal year, and business improvement initiatives to improve the completeness and quality of applications. Despite this success, the volume of applications was 90% higher than previous years, and the backlog of applications that accumulated over the previous two fiscal years remains, albeit trending slowly downward. In the 2022/23 fiscal year, LRS received 620 applications for contaminated sites services, with the current backlog sitting at 400 applications. It is anticipated that the introduction of updated digital systems will further increase the program's efficiency.

Goal 2: A sustainable, resilient low-carbon economy

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

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

Key results

- Working with the Ministry of Finance, conducted a comprehensive review of the carbon tax with the goal of providing more support for people who need it most and more incentives for large industry to reduce emissions.
- Provided \$390,000 to advance implementation of the BC First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan in 2022/23.
- Established the CleanBC Objectives for the Environmental, Social and Governance Framework on Capital (ESGFC) for construction of new or replacement public sector buildings. All major capital projects seeking Treasury Board approval must demonstrate efforts to be resilient to climate risks, be designed to meet a green building and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions standard, and be ready to deploy electric vehicle charging equipment.
- Developed a new Methane from Organic Waste Protocol to incent the reduction of methane emissions from organic waste.

Summary of progress made in 2022/23

In fall 2022, the ministry published the third annual Climate Change Accountability Report (2022 CCAR), which is required by legislation to ensure accountability of its climate efforts. The report summarizes CleanBC's intended actions, expenditures and progress made across various sectors toward B.C.'s commitments and the 2030 target.

The ministry continued efforts to reduce emissions of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas. The ministry completed a regulatory review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the current regulations in reducing methane and has initiated engagement with industry and non-governmental organizations on potential amendments to meet the 75% methane emission reduction target. Methane regulations have been successful in reducing emissions from the oil and gas sector by more than 43% in 2022 as compared to 2014 levels, which is on track to exceed the target of a 45% reduction by 2025.

As part of the [New Energy Action Framework](#) announced in March 2023, the Province has committed to a regulatory emissions cap for the oil and gas industry to ensure B.C. meets its 2030 emissions-reduction target for the sector.

The ministry also released a second draft of the B.C. Forest Carbon Offset Protocol 2.0 for review, which provides the methodology and guidance for developing forest carbon offset projects in B.C.

Performance measures and related discussion

Performance Measures	2020/21 Baseline	2021/22 Actuals	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actuals
2.1a B.C.'s annual GHG emissions as compared to 2007 levels (goal of 40% below 2007 levels by 2030) ²	2019 emissions are 2% ¹ above 2007 levels	2020 emissions are 4% ¹ below 2007 levels	2021 emissions are 4% below 2007 levels	2021 emissions are 3% below 2007 levels
2.1b Carbon intensity of B.C.'s economy (net tonnes CO ₂ e per million dollars of GDP) ³	240 ¹ tonnes CO ₂ e per \$M GDP (2019)	231 ¹ tonnes CO ₂ e per \$M GDP (2020)	227 tonnes CO ₂ e per \$M GDP (2021)	220 tonnes CO ₂ e per \$M GDP (2021)

Data Source: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, based on emissions data from the National Inventory Report and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data from the B.C. Government.

¹Previous years' data and the baseline have changed slightly due to regular annual changes to federal emissions quantification methodology.

²PM 2.1a targets for 2023/24 (2022 data) and 2024/25 (2023 data) were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 7% and 10% below 2007 levels, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

³PM 2.1b targets for 2023/24 (2022 data) and 2024/25 (2023 data) were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 214 and 202, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

2.1a) B.C.'s gross greenhouse gas emissions in 2021 were 62.0 MtCO₂e. This reflects a slight increase from 2020 levels when emissions reduced significantly from the lower economic activity and changes in behaviour due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some level of emissions rebound was expected for 2021 as the economy recovered; however, emissions have not returned to pre-pandemic levels, which is a positive sign. This is due to a combination of two factors:

- 1) The federal government's annual process of updating GHG quantification methodology has lowered B.C.'s emissions across years compared to its previous approach, meaning that 2021 emissions are lower than they would have been if no methodology update had been made. This has also affected B.C.'s GHG reduction target base year of 2007 which means that slightly fewer reductions are required to meet targets compared to previous assessments; and
- 2) some of B.C.'s climate policies announced since 2017 may be starting to reduce emissions.

2.1b) The carbon intensity of B.C.'s economy has continued to decline. Emissions per dollar of GDP are 8% lower in 2021 compared to the baseline year, a positive sign that B.C. is building a cleaner economy.

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

The ministry promotes climate preparedness and adaptation across the province to build a stronger, more resilient province that is ready for the future impacts of climate changes.

Key results

- Established the Flood Debris Management Secretariat to identify, prioritize, and remove debris along eight major river systems after the Atmospheric River Event in November 2021. The program engaged more than 40 First Nations and 60 communities, removed more than 16,000 metric tonnes of debris, and sampled more than 130 sites for hazardous chemicals.
- Launched the Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP) in spring 2022. LGCAP provides \$25M annually to local governments and Modern Treaty Nations to make progress on climate action in support of the Roadmap to 2030 and the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy, with almost 200 participants in the program.
- Provided funding for the completion of an Indigenous Climate Resilience Capacity/Needs Assessment and other priorities to advance implementation of the B.C. First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan.
- Delivered an annual Indigenous Climate Resilience Forum, a three-day virtual event that was attended by 235 people representing 113 First Nations and Indigenous organizations.

Summary of progress made in 2022/23

In 2022/23, the ministry released the [Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy](#) (CPAS), which was developed with significant engagement and input from Indigenous peoples. The CPAS is a cross-government initiative that includes actions across 13 ministries and is supported by over \$500M in funding from 2022/23 – 2024/25. The ministry is coordinating the implementation of CPAS across government.

The ministry began work in 2022/23 to implement a number of priorities in CPAS for which the ministry is responsible, including:

- Building adaptation knowledge and capacity-building for communities, professionals and within government.
- Implementing a new Local Government Climate Action Program to support climate and resiliency goals.
- Expanding the provincial hydroclimatological monitoring network.

In 2022/23, the Climate Action Secretariat worked in partnership with the Indigenous Climate Adaptation Working Group and provided \$2M in funding to develop and advance an Indigenous Climate Resilience Capacity-building Pilot Project (to be implemented in 2023/24).

In 2022/23, the ministry began developing a Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assessment, in partnership with the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. The assessment will be co-developed with First Nations and Indigenous partners.

Performance measures and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
2.2 Provincial CPAS ¹ developed and implemented ³	CPAS 2021/22 partially implemented ²	CPAS Phase 2 (2022/23 to 2024/25) published and implementation initiated	The CPAS Strategy (2022/23 to 2024/25) was published and implementation was initiated.

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

¹The CPAS Phase 1 strategy lays out actions the ministry will take in 2021/2022, while the CPAS Phase 2 strategy includes longer-term actions.

²Emergency events of 2021/22 delayed implementation of some CPAS Phase 1 elements.

³PM 2.2 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as “CPAS Phase 2 first progress evaluation completed” and “Development of an updated climate risk assessment for B.C. initiated; CPAS phase 2 second progress evaluation completed; Development of next climate adaptation strategy for government’s approval.”, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

This target was met. In 2022/23, the ministry released the [Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy](#). Please note that the Target text includes a reference to “Phase 2” (and in previous years, “Phase 1”, which has now been completed), but in the past fiscal the ministry eliminated the language around phases for clarity. The CPAS is a cross-government initiative that includes actions across 13 ministries and is supported by over \$500M in funding from 2022/23 – 2024/25. CPAS was developed with significant engagement and input from Indigenous peoples, including the advice provided by an Indigenous advisory group (Indigenous Climate Action Technical Working Group). The ministry is coordinating the implementation of CPAS across government.

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

Objective 3.1: Implement the revitalized environmental assessment process

The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) has implemented a revitalized environmental assessment process that ensures the legal rights of First Nations are respected and the public's expectation of a thorough, timely, transparent and impartial process is met. The Environmental Assessment Act (2018) (the EA Act) 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.

Key results

- The EAO successfully negotiated an agreement under section 41 of the EA Act with Kitselas First Nation (KFN). The agreement describes how the EAO and KFN will work together on environmental assessments for projects in KFN territory or where KFN's interests may be affected by the project.
- The EAO and the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada jointly completed a staff guidance document to clarify process when impact assessment under the federal Impact Assessment Act has been substituted to an assessment under the EA Act. Project substitution is one approach to achieving the goal “one project, one assessment”, and saves considerable time, money and resources for the federal and provincial governments, proponents, and those being consulted in the EA process.
- The EAO actively worked with proponents to transition five project assessments to the new EA Act process by the transition deadline of December 16, 2022.

Summary of progress made in 2022/23

To support continued implementation of the Environmental Assessment Act (2018), the EAO put together a comprehensive plan to develop the dispute resolution regulation under the EA Act. Dispute resolution is a tool to support consensus-seeking between participating Indigenous nations and the Province at key decision points in the environmental assessment process, by bringing in an external facilitator when the parties are unable to reach consensus on their own. A central element of the regulatory development plan is a program to consult and cooperate with First Nations across the province in alignment with the Declaration Act Secretariat's newly released guidance on how to develop/amend policy and legislation in partnership with First Nations. The plan will inform the development of a dispute regulation which is targeted for completion in the fall of 2023.

The EAO's Digital Services team, in collaboration with teams in the Ministries of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation and Citizens' Services, developed a new online public engagement platform to enhance the public's experience of providing input and feedback on proposed projects undergoing an environmental assessment. The new tool will bring together information on the proposed projects, announcements of upcoming related public comment periods, and various tools to gather the public's feedback on the information provided. The platform is expected to be launched in fall 2023.

In anticipation of projects entering the final phases of an environmental assessment under the EA Act (the Effects Assessment & Recommendation phases), the EAO has undertaken significant policy analysis to establish potential criteria to make a final “sustainability recommendation” to support the Minister's decision on whether to issue a given project an Environmental Assessment Certificate. The “sustainability recommendation” speaks to a determination on whether a project is consistent with the promotion of sustainability by protecting the environment and fostering a sound economy and the well-being of British Columbians and their communities.

Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2020/21 Forecast	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
3.1 <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> phased implementation ¹	Develop regulations and/or policies that enhance functionality of the Act	1. Develop regulations and/or policies that enhance functionality of the Act 2. Identify a framework to evaluate whether implementation of the Act is achieving the intended purposes	1. Developed regulations and/or policies that enhance functionality of the Act 2. Identified a framework to evaluate whether implementation of the Act is achieving the intended purposes

Data source: Environmental Assessment Office, manually compiled.

¹PM 3.1 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as “Conduct an evaluation of whether the Act is achieving the intended purposes” and “Complete the evaluation and develop performance measures to assess performance of the Act”, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget website](#).

This target was met. At the beginning of the fiscal year, the EAO determines a set of policy priorities for development to ensure that the Act is effectively implemented— progress against this set of policy priorities sets EAO’s annual performance measure. The following are examples of some of the key policy priorities that were completed: “Designation Policy” was approved; a draft “Public Engagement Policy” was finalized to support stakeholder engagement activities in fiscal 2023/24; and, the discussion paper on the Dispute Resolution Regulation was completed to support the consult and cooperate process in fiscal 2023/24. Significant effort was also invested into laying out a proposed framework for conducting the upcoming five-year review of the Act, which received EAO Executive endorsement.

Financial Report

Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations ¹ (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Operating Expenses					
Environmental Protection	19,837	86,655	106,492	101,277	(5,215)
BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails	58,931	23,711	82,642	83,449	807
Conservation Officer Services	19,254	-	19,254	25,840	6,586
Climate Action	42,513	4,064	46,577	44,634	(1,943)
Clean BC Program for Industry	142,919	87,498	230,417	229,626	(791)
Executive and Support Services	28,890	-	28,890	29,446	556
Environmental Assessment Office	15,367	-	15,367	14,821	(546)
Park Enhancement Fund	9,800	2,993	12,793	12,793	0
Sustainable Enhancement Fund	30,435	-	30,435	24,272	(6,163)
Environmental Management Act	-	8,360	8,360	8,360	0
Sub-total	367,946	213,281	581,227	574,518	(6,709)
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual ²	-	-	0	(226)	(226)
Total	367,946	213,281	581,227	574,292	(6,935)
Ministry Capital Expenditures					
Executive and Support Services	42,514	-	42,514	26,404	(16,110)
Park Enhancement Fund	400	-	400	12	(388)
Total	42,914	0	42,914	26,416	(16,498)
Other Financing Transactions					
Climate Action: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Offsets (Purchase)					
Receipts	-	-	0	-	0
Disbursements	10,000	-	10,000	6,717	(3,283)
Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)	10,000	-	10,000	6,717	(3,283)

¹ “Other Authorizations” include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the “estimated amount” under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

² The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$0.226 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of March 31, 2023, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

[Climate Solutions Council](#)

The Climate Solutions Council was created in October 2017. The Council provides strategic advice to government on climate action and clean economic growth. It includes members from First Nations, environmental organizations, industry, academia, youth, labour and local government. The Council supports a steady and committed approach to climate action that drives down emissions, increases economic opportunities and improves community resilience.

Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in Minister George Heyman's 2020 Mandate Letter.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
Work with cabinet colleagues to advance clean economic opportunities and CleanBC goals as our government responds to and recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete. As part of the COVID-19 Action Plan, the Province delayed scheduled implementation dates to B.C.'s carbon tax until April 2021, to help businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery. Working with colleagues across government, CAS provided policy analysis to inform priorities for the September 2020 StrongerBC COVID-19 Economic Recovery plan. Approximately half of the \$1.5B of funding for the economic recovery plan was devoted to 'clean recovery' initiatives, which were implemented throughout 2020-2021.
Begin the phase-out of single-use plastics province-wide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In progress. In April 2022, the Preventing Single-use and Plastic Waste in British Columbia Intentions Paper was released to identify actions to regulate the use of certain single-use and plastic items. A What We Heard Report was published in spring 2023. Feedback from the engagement will be used to inform drafting of the new regulation.

<p>Keep B.C. on track to meet our 2030 greenhouse gas emissions target, set sectoral and interim targets, and legislate a new target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress. • In December 2020, the Province set an interim emissions target, which requires B.C. to reduce emissions by 16% below 2007 levels by 2025. • In March 2021, the Province established new 2030 emission reduction targets for four sectors, with 2007 as a baseline: Transportation, 27-32%; Industry, 38-43%; Oil and gas, 33-38%; Buildings and communities, 59-64%. • In October 2021, the Province released the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030, a more ambitious climate plan that builds on the CleanBC plan released in 2018. The Roadmap introduced new ideas and measures to help B.C. achieve the legislated 30% emissions reduction target for 2030 and set the course to reach net-zero by 2050. • In fall 2022, the Province published the third annual Climate Change Accountability Report (2022 CCAR), which is required by legislation to ensure accountability of its climate efforts. • The 2022 CCAR reported the latest CleanBC progress to targets modelling, which estimates we will achieve 97% of the 2030 emissions target if all CleanBC measures are implemented (a gap of 0.8 MtCO₂e), and 85% of the 2025 interim target (a gap of 1.6 MtCO₂e). • Recognizing that a key area of uncertainty was how to achieve the oil and gas sectoral target (a commitment made under the Roadmap and critical to keeping B.C. on track to achieve the Provincial target), the Province introduced the new Energy Action
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2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
	<p>Framework in March 2023 to put a cap on oil and gas sector emissions and further electrify the economy.</p>
<p>Work with government's Climate Solutions Council and relevant industrial sectors to enhance CleanBC's Program for Industry so that additional funding is available to support mines, pulp mills, oil and gas processing plants, and other industrial facilities in their efforts to reduce GHG emissions and move to cleaner operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress. • Budget 2023 announced a transition to a made-in-B.C. Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS) for large industrial emitters, which will replace the CleanBC Industrial Incentive Program. The CleanBC Industry Fund will remain in place but also undergo a transition to align with the B.C. OBPS. This is in line with advice from the Climate Solutions Council in their October 2022 letter on B.C.'s carbon tax review. • To support industry's efforts to reduce their GHG emissions, the CleanBC Industry Fund was enhanced with an additional \$53M in 2022/23, increasing investment in emissions reduction projects to more than \$90M in that year. This enhancement builds on a three-year record of investing more than \$300M from the Province, industry, and partners to build a cleaner economy.
<p>Complete and coordinate implementation of a provincial Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete: The Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy was released June 2022, with over \$500M in funding for three fiscal years. • Ongoing: The ministry is coordinating implementation of the strategy across government.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Accelerate the move toward a net-zero emission bus fleet powered by electrification, hydrogen fuel cell technologies, and other zero-emissions technologies, including supporting TransLink's "aggressive" level plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TransLink released a Climate Action Strategy in January 2022 that maps an aggressive path to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, including zero emissions from their bus fleet by 2040. • In December 2022, all ministers received new mandate letters. At this time, the Minister responsible for TransLink changed from Minister Heyman to Minister Fleming. • This priority is being managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as of December 2022.
<p>Work with TransLink to help families get around more affordably by making transit free for children up to and including age 12.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete.
<p>Work with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to integrate TransLink and BC Transit services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This priority is being managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as of December 2022.
<p>Work with the TransLink Mayors' Council through its 10-year planning process to continue work to extend the Millennium Line to Arbutus, with an eventual terminus at UBC, and ensure prompt design and construction of the Surrey-Langley Skytrain.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Fall 2022, Minister Heyman asked the Provincial team to lead the development of a business case for this project in partnership with the other project participants. • In partnership with TransLink, City of Vancouver, UBC and the Indigenous partners, the Province is leading the planning phase of the SkyTrain Extension to UBC. • This priority is being managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as of December 2022.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Reduce congestion and make transit an option for more people by working with TransLink to improve and expand the network for people living in the Fraser Valley and Sea-to-Sky regions, including by expanding West Coast Express service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed business case and received formal approval of Provincial funding for the Surrey Langley SkyTrain project in July 2022. The project was also consolidated into one phase rather than two, resulting in a \$500M savings and completion two years earlier than previously planned, opening in 2028 and going all the way to Langley. This priority is being managed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as of December 2022.
<p>With support from the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, take steps to ensure owners of large industrial projects are bonded moving forward so that they – not B.C. taxpayers – pay the full costs of environmental cleanup if their projects are abandoned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In progress. In April 2022, a discussion paper for the Public Interest Bonding Strategy was released for public engagement. Feedback from the engagement was published in a What We Heard Report in fall 2022. Enabling legislation for the first phase of the Public Interest Bonding Strategy is under development for the spring 2023 session.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Continue to work with partners to protect species at risk and work collaboratively with other ministries to protect and enhance B.C.'s biodiversity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • BC Parks continues to work with partners and other ministries to protect areas of high biodiversity, like the newly established Incomappleux Conservancy which protects an area of old growth inland rainforest and habitat for species at risk. • BC Parks invested almost \$1M in 2022/23 from the BC Parks licence plate program into conservation, including inventory and monitoring; managing impacts to biodiversity and ecosystems; and ecological restoration. • BC Parks invested \$156,000 in the Living Lab for Climate Change and Conservation program to encourage climate change research in protected areas through partnerships with academic institutions and their collaborative work with the broader conservation community.
<p>With support from the Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Parliament Secretary for Fisheries and Aquaculture, lead work to protect clean water, including through the creation of a Watershed Security Strategy and the associated Watershed Security Fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This priority is being managed by the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Parliamentary Secretary Mandate Letter Priority</p> <p>Recognizing the heightened importance of outdoor recreation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, guide work to create new campgrounds, trails, and protected areas; propose new funding to improve infrastructure; and ensure provincial parks remain affordable for British Columbians, with support from the Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress. • As part of the \$21.5M Recreation Expansion Mandate project, over 30 projects got underway or were in progress in 2022/23. The project will add new campsites; new day-use opportunities; and, new and renewed trails over the coming years. • Projects completed in 2022/23 include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day-use upgrades, trail enhancements and accessibility improvements were completed at Rathtrevor and Miracle Beach Provincial Parks. • 50 new elevated tent platforms were added to Juan de Fuca Provincial Park, along with other significant infrastructure improvements, including new food hangs, boardwalks, staircases and bridges. • Approximately 16 kilometers of multi-use trails in the Partridge Hills area of Gowlland Tod Provincial Park were formalized and upgraded. A new parking lot is also being added to improve safety and reduce road congestion.
<p>Parliamentary Secretary Mandate Letter Priority</p> <p>Lead work with the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and the Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations to reflect Indigenous Peoples' history and cultures in provincial parks and wilderness areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In progress. • BC Parks has worked in collaboration with First Nations partners to draft a report (nearing completion) that will include key milestones and propose recommendations for how BC Parks can improve the reflection of Indigenous Peoples' history and culture in parks and protected areas.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Parliamentary Secretary Mandate Letter Priority</p> <p>Work with the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, the Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations, and with neighbouring jurisdictions to cooperatively develop and invest in new strategies aimed at better protecting our shared wildlife and habitat corridors, including work to implement the Together for Wildlife Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • Through the BC Parks licence plate program, we continue to leverage partnerships with Ministry of Forests and Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship to deliver projects including large mammal inventory and terrestrial ecosystem mapping.
<p>Parliamentary Secretary Mandate Letter Priority</p> <p>Support the Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations to develop a new provincial coastal marine strategy – in partnership with First Nations and federal and local governments – to better protect coastal habitat while growing coastal economies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing. • Through working groups and other participation, BC Parks is taking an active role supporting the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship with the development of the Coastal Marine Strategy (CMS), ensuring alignment of the CMS with BC Parks’ Marine Recreation Framework.