

**Coastal Planning Workshop Introduction**  
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**Why are we here? Why do coastal planning?**

- Marine and terrestrial systems are inextricably linked in ecosystem processes, the life cycles of species, and the livelihoods and identity of coastal communities.
- We need to respond to coastal stresses evident in the degradation or destruction of important coastal habitats, biodiversity loss, species decline, reduced water quality and volumes, impacts of inappropriately sited coastal infrastructure, and access for traditional users and coastal communities to shores and (increasingly) limited resources.
- We need to address rapid population growth in coastal areas, mounting conflicts between users, and the inability of existing institutions to deal with these issues effectively.
- We are here because ICZM aims to unite government, community, science and management, and sectoral and public interests to maintain biodiversity and coastal communities.
- As such, integrated coastal zone management is a laudable, if lofty goal. CZM is also a concept, not yet a reality. And successful CZM will truly be as much of an art as a science.

**What issues and questions will be addressed throughout the conference?**

1. There exists a complicated mix of institutions, policy and law. Thus far, management in the coastal zone has had the effect of geographically fortifying programs and plans along provincial and federal agency lines as opposed to reflecting ecosystem and community considerations. This is an opportunity to clarify relationships and direction.
2. There is a disconnect between action and issues- action is frequently addressed at the local level, while the issues are transboundary in nature, the policies impacting the issue are multi-jurisdictional, and responsibility is fragmented. Institutions are frequently working independently with limited inter-, or even intra-, agency cooperation. Some might even say that government has worked at cross-purposes. As such there is no coherence, no coordination, and no consistency. This is an opportunity to integrate and coordinate.
3. Recognizing that action generally occurs at the local level, there has been an effort to devolve responsibility. However, due to the nature of the coastal zone, 'local' governments rarely have the resources in terms of funding, technical capacity, or even jurisdiction, to work proactively. When rural communities are struggling to maintain essential services such as hospitals and schools, the reality is that there is very little political will to move coastal zone planning to the top of the list. This is an opportunity to identify priorities and realistic, manageable projects.
4. There are incredibly difficult issues relating to power-sharing, authority, and responsibility to be addressed. Alternative governance models require a reworking of power relations that integrates top-down management with bottom-up initiatives. Community-level participation, in the absence of power-sharing, exploits volunteer time and energy and undermines confidence in government-driven processes. First Nations title and leadership must also be recognized. Coastal communities should take the initiative in this regard—there is no need to await Supreme Court decisions or provincial or federal acknowledgement. This merely delays proactive management and action at the local level. This is an opportunity for the issue of power to be confronted at the outset of a process. And this is opportunity for agencies and communities to demonstrate vision, leadership and courage.
5. There is a need to recognize that just because coastal zone planning is a good idea doesn't mean it will be successful. There are important examples throughout the world and Canada that demonstrate how to do, and how not to do, CZM. This is an opportunity for the criteria for success to be identified and pitfalls and hazards to be determined.
6. Having said that, there is a need to recognize that progress in CZM requires understanding of culture, traditions, and history of a given place. There is a need to recognize context. There is no blueprint or tried and true formula—nor should there be. This is an opportunity to be innovative and think outside the box.

## **What are the Planning Processes on the coast? What context are we operating in?**

I have said it before, and I will say it again, we exist in an age of process. Product has fallen off the map. It is the map itself that matters. More and more, it is about how we get there, not so much where we are going.

I live on Haida Gwaii. In the last five years there have been no less than eight processes at addressing resource management issues on the islands. There was the Tlell Watershed Local Resource Use Plan, then an attempted and aborted Queen Charlotte Islands LRMP, a community forest process, the Haida Gwaii community action planning process for abalone, the all islands protocol agreement process, the initiation of a marine conservation planning process for all the waters of Haida Gwaii, the Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands Heritage Tourism Strategy process, and now the most recent- the Haida Gwaii Land Use Planning Process (terrestrial component). This is our LRMP, reincarnated with a different name. And if we look a little closer at the process map we can see oil and gas on the horizon, the proposed national marine conservation area in Gwaii Haanas, Hecate Strait wind farm development, and the marine half of the land use planning process all calling for and, in fact, requiring community participation.

This, perhaps, reflects the learning-by-doing philosophy of the day. And really, in these days of participatory democracy and stakeholder management, there is no going back. But the reality is that people are burned out—we have been drained by process.

On the North and Central Coasts, I imagine there is much the same reality. CZM is not independent of any of these processes. It must work to be the matrix of all of the processes- most of which involve the same individuals, organizations, and agencies. When Kelly called me about this conference, she asked what coastal planning was being done on Haida Gwaii. Well, everything and nothing. Many things are going on, most of which involve the coast, few of which are linked, and none of which are referred to as coastal zone management. Processes tend to be marine or terrestrial, rarely both. There is no explicit discussion of CZM on the islands.

Yet all the processes I mentioned are, in a way, CZM in disguise. They are also largely unlinked and disconnected. Now we are embarking on the grand-daddy of all processes—our land use plan. A few interesting facts and observations about the process:

- The CHN are co-managing the land use plan with the provincial government- which is unprecedented in British Columbia.
- The province has pushed to have the planning process address land use first, and then marine- despite objections from island residents who wish to see the processes linked. Unfortunately, the legacy of Gwaii Haanas National Park Reserve is a constant reminder that if you leave marine planning to the end, it may never get done. When Gwaii Haanas was established over 15 years ago it was agreed that an adjacent marine conservation area would be designated after the terrestrial park reserve got its house in order. With the exception of some inventory reports, there has been little planning and outreach done with respect to the marine conservation area.
- People see the same fate for the planning process. Cynicism about the 15 month deadline is already undermining confidence in the process. In public open houses, the question was raised again and again- how can we manage terrestrial systems if we don't know what is happening in adjacent marine habitats? Although addressing both at the same time, takes time (witness the Central Coast), a realistic timeline would be perceived as an honest admission that these things do take time to do well.
- I should also mention in this room (of which I am a part) that there is an aversion to expert-based solutions—to the sense that a process is trying to guide them to the 'best solutions.' There is suspicion of a *fait accompli*, a take-it-or-leave-it proposition in consultation, especially when processes are initiated by government agencies, or when local processes are dovetailed into larger regional (and often bureaucratic) processes. Overcoming this distrust and skepticism may be one of the biggest hurdles in effective CZM.

### **What are the Characteristics of a good coastal plan? What do I want to see?**

1. A good coastal plan needs a solid administrative structure that can address coordination at all levels of government.
2. The management structure should be underpinned by legislation in such a way that establishes both the financial resources for administration and implementation.
3. A good coastal plan coordinates local activities to ensure consistency with CZM goals, but is flexible enough to encourage creative and innovative approaches from coastal communities.
4. A good coastal plan focuses on long term planning. Implicit in this is a need to address the fluctuations in political support for coastal programs as elected officials (and their sympathies and hostilities) ebb and flow.
5. A good coastal plan, admittedly, involves process. Process is important in two respects: first, planning must consider ecosystem processes and link headwaters to oceans; second, the planning process itself must be designed to be inclusive, robust, accessible, and understandable. The human process for initiating CZM is as important as ecosystem processes you are managing for.
6. A good coastal plan has clear goals and objectives. It also must address the causes of problems, not simply the symptoms.
7. A good coastal plan will consider all values of the coast, including non-market values. Although economic considerations are often lauded in community development, social and cultural values provide the very center of coastal community identity.
8. A good coastal plan focuses on quality of information, not quantity.
9. All coastal plans should be considered experimental and living. The focus should be on encouraging and accommodating learning communities and responsive agencies. An experimental approach re-enforces that management decisions must often be made in the face of considerable uncertainty.
10. A good coastal plan is manageable. Don't bite off more than you can chew. A big part of the challenge will be getting community support and buy-in—this can only be achieved by incremental successes that will slowly build inertia and support. There is a massive crisis of confidence and legitimacy in government agency management in coastal communities. Rebuilding respect and trust will be a necessary (and incredibly demanding) part of the process.
11. A good coastal plan belongs to coastal communities. Don't overly rely on outside experts and alienate people who live in the immediate area. This is not because of some observed ethic in coastal communities, or even because there is latent knowledge of ecosystem processes to be tapped, it is also an important political and ethical consideration. A good coastal plan will work when a community is ready and able to participate meaningfully. Local ownership of processes and projects increases community support, involvement, and commitment.
12. A good coastal plan will have a realistic timeline. It takes ages for programs to mature, communities to learn, and bureaucracies to change. We are talking dinosaur timelines- not piecemeal funding for one to five years. These are naïve and self-defeating timelines that invite failure.

Successful CZM sews together place-based initiatives that share principles and work toward a common goal- sustaining coastal ecosystems and communities.

So when one asks 'what is CZM?' I say 'what isn't CZM?'