



Forest Carbon Mitigation Policy: A Policy Gap Analysis for British Columbia

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Core policy choices

1. Change policies to require or incent GHG reduction
2. Directly fund programs
3. Maintain status quo and rely on offsets

Forest carbon offsets

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carbon Neutral Government provides modest market for offsets• Greenhouse Gas Industrial Reporting and Control Act and Regulation could establish larger market (awaiting FCOP)
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Even when renewed offset market demand limited
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Expand demand for offsets by increasing eligible sources in BC or linking to other markets</i>

Accounting

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BC estimates and reports full forest sectors emissions, but only accounts for net deforestation and 2 offset projects
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most anthropogenic forest sector emissions/sinks not included in accounted
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More fully incorporate forest emissions in provincial accounting to increase incentives to pursue cost-effective mitigation strategies across all of the province's emission sources

Carbon tax

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$30 per tonne on fuel combustion
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not cover forest emissions
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply carbon tax to slash burning

Tenure

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Virtually all tenure types only give rights to timber• Community Forest, First Nations tenures: “botanical forest products and other prescribed products”
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tenure holders do not have the right to manage for carbon unless covered by Atmospheric Benefit Agreement
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give tenure holder rights to manage for carbon

Atmospheric benefit agreements

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 First Nations agreements• 2014 – ABA's allowed for non-FNs: Cheakamus Community Forest
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• only a small fraction of province covered
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• expand area of forest covered

Forest & Range Practices Act

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FRPA has 11 values, but not carbon
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carbon not a value to be managed under FRPA
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amend FRPA to include carbon<ul style="list-style-type: none">- It would also have to be considered in AAC- Could also include it in Land Use Orders

Fire management

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildfire Act requires managing fire risks - Leads to common practice of slash burning
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current wildfire policies do not consider or incorporate managing forestland for carbon
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage or require greater consideration of carbon in fire management

Increase wood use and longer-lived wood products

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wood First Act promotes would use in government-funded buildings; changes to building code to allow taller wood buildings
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited leverage over private sector decision-making
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A more directive approach

Bioenergy

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modest policies to encourage wood bioenergy use, including 2 secondary tenures applied
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited direction provided in policy
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide financial incentives or regulatory requirements for forest bioenergy use where it contributes to GHG emission reductions

Direct government funding

Current status	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Announcement of Forest Carbon Initiative in Climate Leadership Plan; \$150 million commitment to Forest Enhancement Society of BC
Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No existing funding or operational plan to perform rehabilitation sufficient to meet 12 MT target by 2050
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and implementation of rigorous operational plan with sufficient funding

Policy gaps - Conclusions

1. Climate policies have only modest coverage of forests

- Some management emissions still not accounted
- Not covered by carbon tax
- Eligible for CNG and GGIRCA offsets
- ABAs cover only small area of province

2. Forest policies generally ignore carbon

- No tenure rights
- Not considered in AAC
- Not a FRPA value
- Not addressed in fire

3. Promoting wood use limited

4. Bioenergy policy limited

Next steps

1. Stakeholder input

2. Develop refined policies and apply
evaluative criteria

e.g., Effectiveness in reducing forest sector GHGs

Cost-effectiveness

Administrative feasibility

Political feasibility



Thank you!

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