



Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative

The Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative was created to improve collaborative watershed governance organization's capacity to find sustainable sources funding. The Initiative aims to test financial mechanisms through pilot projects, build capacity among the watershed governance community, to build partnerships and foster collaboration.

Why this is important

A well-documented challenge among local watershed organizations is finding sources of sustainable funding to start, continue or enhance the work they are doing. In regions of the province that are proactively pursuing collaborative watershed governance, it has become clear that key stakeholders, including local governments, are not fully aware of their potential role in helping to secure sustainable funding and the available funding tools and opportunities.

Given the new *Water Sustainability Act*, which came into force on February 29, 2016, it is an important time to help develop capacity for implementing more sustainable funding sources that can support ongoing collaborative watershed governance to protect long-term fresh water health and community prosperity.

Who are we

The Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative was born out of a collaboration of several organizations in late 2015 and now includes:

- POLIS Water Sustainability Project
- Real Estate Foundation BC
- BC Ministry of Environment
- Fraser Basin Council
- BC Water Funders Collaborative
- First Nations Fisheries Council
- Private Forest Landowners Association
- Local Government

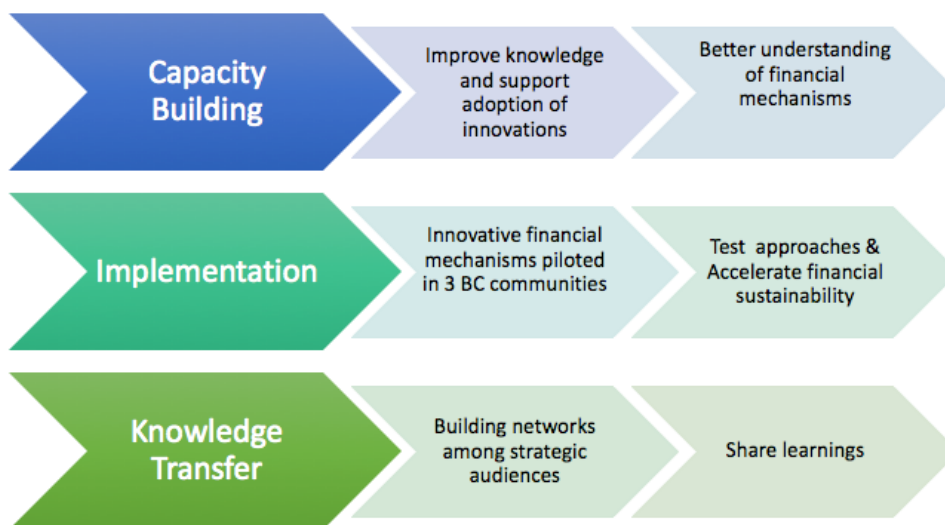
This Task Force builds on the successful work that the respective organizations have done to support watershed governance in the province and their commitment to helping build capacity for sustainable funding.

The path forward

We will assist and accelerate the adoption of sustainable funding mechanisms to support watershed governance, protection and management activities.

The goals of the Initiative are to:

1. improve knowledge about both existing and new mechanisms to fund watershed governance, protection and management activities;
2. test funding models on a pilot project basis by applying them in specific watersheds in support of specific watershed governance processes; and,
3. transfer knowledge about funding watershed governance activities to other communities and watersheds across the province.

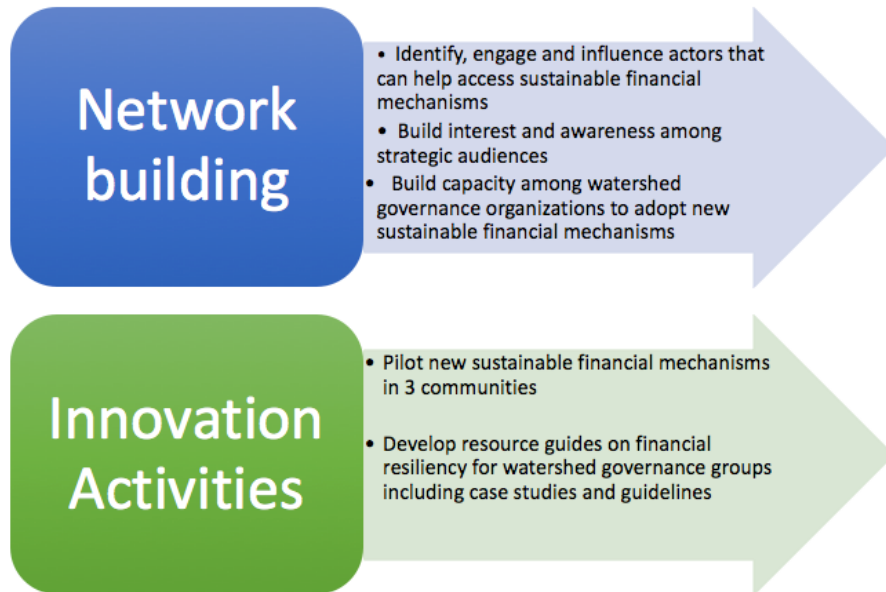


The Initiative will help refine our understanding of the financial mechanisms that can sustainably support collaborative watershed governance entities to better enable them to undertake leadership roles and better respond to local challenges in their watersheds.

The SFWGI takes a two pronged approach that addresses both the overall environment influencing funding for watershed governance and applying innovative approaches through pilot projects to better understand solutions and drive impact.

1. Network Building activities to advance the way collaborative watershed governance organizations think about their funding options and engage on the topic of sustainable financing mechanisms. Building awareness, engagement and partnerships with business, government and civil society will help develop innovation.

2. Innovation activities will include up to 3 pilot projects to test new financial mechanisms, refinement of solutions, and support for the amplification of new methods for financing watershed governance.



The Impact

The Sustainable Funding for Watershed Governance Initiative is expected to build capacity in the watershed governance sector by the 2019. The following important impacts to watershed governance funding are anticipated over the long term:

- 1 to 3 local watersheds will pilot a sustainable funding mechanism for watershed governance.
- British Columbia will have more financially resilient collaborative watershed governance organizations;
- Local governments will be more engaged and informed about the value of collaborative watershed governance organizations in their communities; and,
- There will be a higher capacity among a network of collaborative watershed governance entities to support learning and knowledge sharing.

Pilot Project Component

The Initiative will support up to 3 projects in British Columbia. These projects will test funding models on a pilot project basis by applying them in specific watersheds in support of specific watershed governance outcomes. The Task Force will attempt to identify three projects that represent geographic diversity in the province and will test different financial tools, and address a unique watershed governance challenge.

What does participation in the Initiative offer?

1. Resources to support testing a new funding model.
2. Support from the project manager to explore and refine funding mechanism options.
3. In-kind support and expertise from the Task Force members.
4. Networking and knowledge sharing opportunities with other pilot participants.
5. Elevated project profile.

Who would be interested?

Watershed governance organizations or Indigenous governments that are working towards developing watershed management/planning/governance initiatives who have a proven track record of success. Success would include a history of implementation of watershed governance goals, processes or and a level of maturity. Pilot project candidates will have demonstrated the potential for durability and impact.

Candidates should have some of the characteristics listed below. The organization should have:

1. Support from and partnership (or at least engagement) with local government to ensure appropriate local context and accountability.
2. Indigenous government should have support of local leadership.
3. Current funding based on a number of sources.
4. A watershed management plan (or one in development) that takes an integrated perspective and a willingness to address cumulative impacts.
5. A commitment to co-governance with First Nations.
6. Strong multi-stakeholder engagement and partnership.
7. The availability of or access to data, information, and monitoring to ensure a good understanding of the state of the hydrology, water quality, actual water use, and health of the watershed.
8. A commitment to continuous peer-to-peer learning and capacity building, including strong networking among practitioners and regular forums to accelerate learning and sharing from a diversity of experiences.

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