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Abstract

Assessing success at achieving biodiversity objectives in managed forests

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Managing for biodiversity is an integral part of achieving sustainable forest management. Because of the complexity of ecosystems and ecosystem processes, much uncertainty faces forest managers as they attempt to design and implement forest practices to maintain biodiversity across their land base. To reduce this uncertainty, scientists and policy-makers recommend adopting an adaptive management process—a research approach that provides forest managers with a mechanism to obtain and input new information into their management plan, and to adjust the plan accordingly to meet desired forest management objectives. This process relies heavily on *effectiveness monitoring*; that is, assessing the extent to which management strategies were effective in achieving desired outcomes. Forest managers need to know what to monitor and how to monitor it; however, it is important to formulate these decisions within the recommended steps of the adaptive management program. This extension note provides forest managers with an overview of how adaptive management can work to help achieve forest management objectives around maintaining biodiversity, with a particular emphasis on monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the chosen strategy. We describe the four steps in the adaptive management process, explain how effectiveness monitoring fits into the process, and provide a case study that describes how this process is currently used in British Columbia. In the summary section, we provide a list of additional resources on adaptive management and effectiveness monitoring in British Columbia.

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