



Update on Southern B.C. Chinook Strategic Planning Initiative

FRAFS

January 29, 2013



Background

- Broad pattern of decline, affecting many chinook populations in a range of geographic areas (Fraser River, Strait of Georgia, WCVI) in southern B.C.; however, not all populations affected (e.g. South Thompson)
- Populations facing:
 - depressed and/or declining spawner abundance
 - reduced and variable marine (and freshwater) survival rates
 - high uncertainty about future production
 - unknown impact of hatchery activities
 - increasing uncertainty related to low return rates of Coded Wire Tags
 - Other factors may include: pressures on freshwater habitat, increased predation, ecosystem effects from climate changes...



Southern BC Chinook Strategic Plan

Purpose/Objectives:

- Develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan to address the decline in Southern B.C. Chinook salmon.
- The Strategic Plan will specify conservation objectives with timelines for Southern BC Chinook conservation units, as well as fisheries, enhancement and habitat actions required to achieve the conservation objectives.
- The Strategic Plan will provide guidance to development of the annual Integrated Fisheries Management Plan.



Challenges

- Managing and working with a large amount of complex information/data.
- Developing a common understanding of information among participants.
- Maintaining momentum with many competing demands on time.

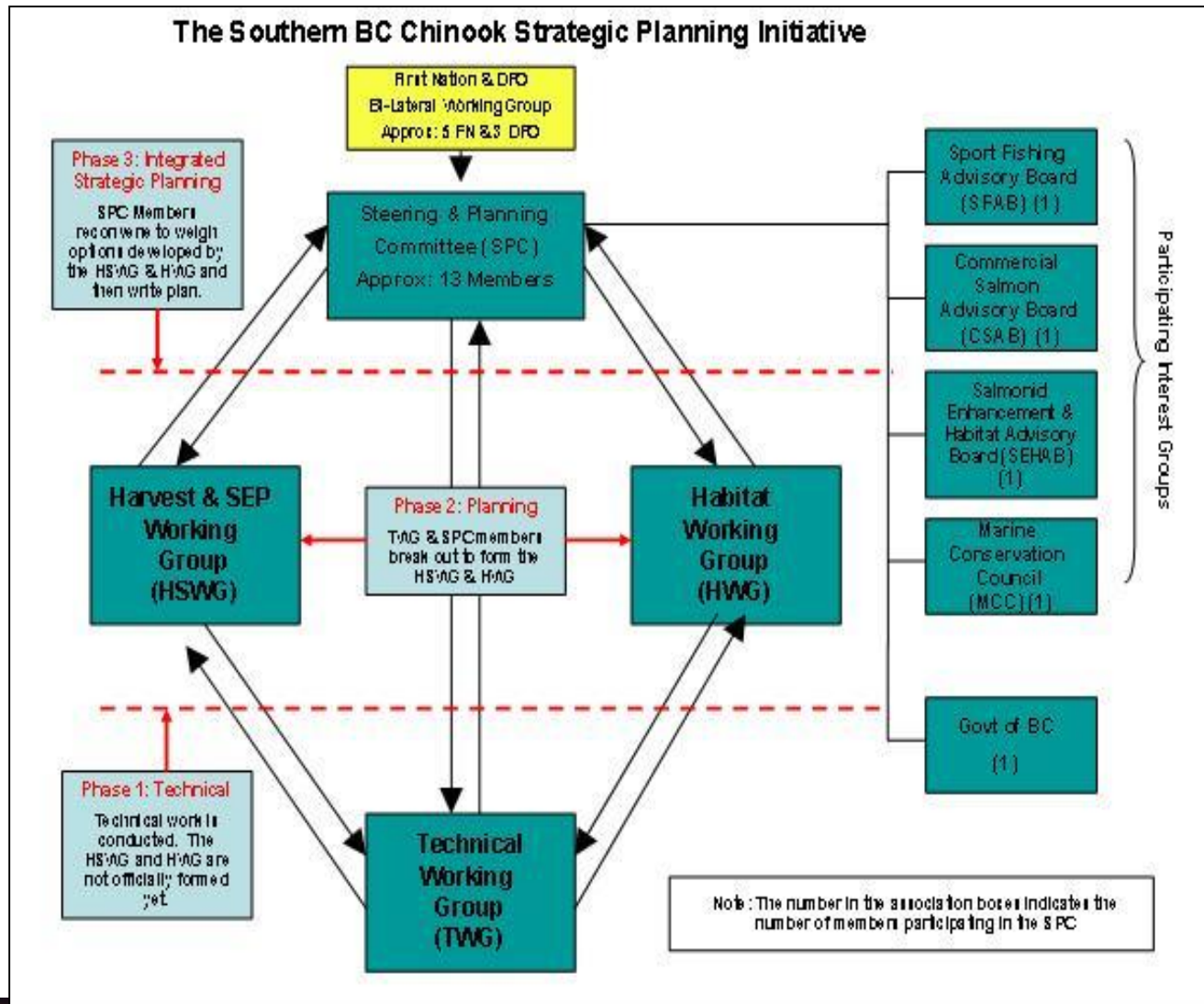


Status:

1. Completion of Terms of Reference
 - Agreement on and Establishment of Governance Structure
2. Steering and Planning Committee, and Technical Working Group are underway
3. ESSA Technologies were hired to manage the planning process using a structured approach. Work is challenging, but on track.



Governance Structure / Approach





Technical Working Group Activities

TWG members: Phase 1, continuing to Phase 2

- TWG representatives: First Nations (10), Multi-interest (1), Province of BC (1), Recreational Fishery Sector (2), DFO (13) for a total of 27 members & counting...

Data and Analysis

- Development of Conservation Unit (CU) Profile to hold CU information, statistics and results of status review
 - ✓ Draft profile completed -contains CU Description, Habitat Profile, Enhancement Profile, Fishery Impacts Profile, Ecological Linkages, Significant Pressures on CU abundance, Status Metrics and Assessment
 - ✓ Development of Freshwater Habitat Status Report Card
 - ✓ Development of Marine Habitat Status Report Card



Technical Working Group Activities (cont)

Deliverables (Phase 1, supporting advancement to Phase 2)

Two Science workshops delivered:

1. pre-COSEWIC workshop (March 6-8, 2013): presented information to assess status of conservation units; and,
 2. PSC-Southern Endowment Fund workshop (Independent Science Review) (May 22-24 2013): to identify constraints to productivity of Southern BC chinook.
- Technical experts are now supporting the strategic planning process – e.g. develop performance indicators, conduct analyses of options.

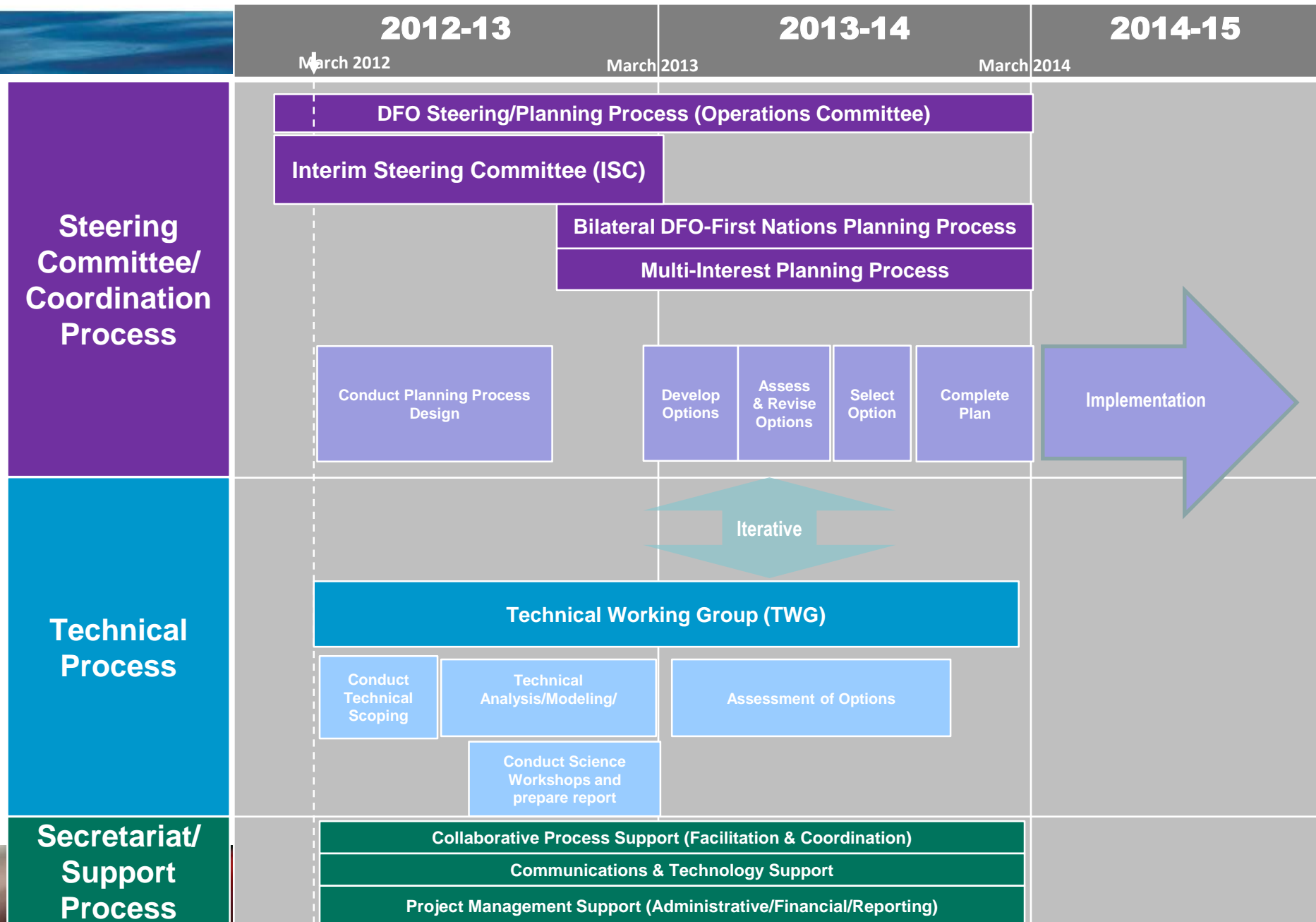


Integrated Strategic Planning Process

Phase 3: Process is consistent with structured 5 step planning procedure outlined in Wild Salmon Policy as follows:

1. **ID planning priorities** – informed by work of technical group on CU status and bottlenecks to productivity First Nations and stakeholders put forward priorities (e.g. rebuilding, maintaining fishery harvest levels, etc...) (*Initiated spring 2013*)
2. **ID a range of possible alternative management strategies** – including fisheries management measures, habitat restoration, enhancement initiatives, etc... (*Ongoing*)
3. **Establish biological, social and economic performance indicators** – First Nations and stakeholders identify indicators of importance for assessing management alternatives (*Ongoing*)
4. **Assess likely impacts of management alternatives** – evaluation by appropriate technical experts
5. **Select the preferred management alternative** – reach as much consensus as possible and document differences to inform Ministers decision making.

Southern BC Chinook Strategic Planning Process – Proposed Approach & Timeline





Next Steps

- Steering/Planning Committee, with strong support from the Technical Working Group will continue integrated strategic planning with First Nations, interest groups, and invited participants.
- Undertake consultations as appropriate using existing processes and information developed through the Strategic Planning initiative.
- Develop an integrated plan that identifies conservation objectives with timelines for Southern BC Chinook conservation units, as well as fisheries, enhancement and habitat actions required to achieve the conservation objectives.
- Seek approval of the Plan, and proceed with implementation.
- Continue with more detailed work in accordance with priorities and funding.
- *Congratulations to all those who have worked on this initiative – great progress has been made!*