

For the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Members -for Consideration

Re: Clarifying Watershed Targets

For the past several months the TAC has worked on indentifying and fleshing out a number of targets for the watershed. At its June 29, 2011 meeting, TAC members discussed the merit of and appropriateness of language around target setting in relation to the Cowichan watershed.

A major responsibility of the Cowichan Watershed Board is to review and implement the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan (Plan) as appropriate.

What are targets and why set them?

As used by the TAC, *targets for the Cowichan Watershed* represent desirable conditions that could/should:

- a. *be maintained or*
- b. *achieved during a specified time period.*

We identified several reasons for establishing targets. These initial targets are intended to:

- Focus and motivate concrete accomplishments;
- Support achievement of/compliment some of the 6 Goals and 23 Objectives included in the Plan;
- Focus efforts of the Watershed Board and its partners;
- Integrate a of number of environmental health factors;
- Reinforce watershed thinking;
- Be measurable (Can be supported by valid science/data collection on ongoing basis);
- Be meaningful/relevant/inspiring to the public and funders;
- Be understandable/easily communicated;
- Be achievable within a specific timeframe or on an ongoing basis;
- Be affordable; and,
- Be added to over time as appropriate.

What targets are not intended to be/do?

Targets are not intended to:

- Be ultimate indicators of ecosystem health for the watershed or components of the watershed e.g. indices;
- Be an exhaustive list; and,
- Supplant or diminish the importance of existing goals/objectives/actions included in the Plan.

The TAC's use of the term 'target' is consistent with its use in a number of scientific disciplines e.g. greenhouse gas reduction targets (achieving X % reduction or achieving X level of emissions by a certain date or not exceeding 350 ppm of atmospheric CO₂). Another common use of the term target that is directly comparable to that proposed by the TAC is stream flow target setting based on the biological needs of fish that is prevalent in other watersheds.

Although not related to ecosystems or watersheds it is helpful that our use of the term target is consistent with uses that the public is broadly familiar with e.g. sales targets, cost reduction targets, blood sugar targets, cholesterol targets, wait time targets etc.