

# Progressive Stewardship of Mountain Ecosystems: Next Practices for Sustainability

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## Economic Focus Area

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### The Vision

The vision for economic sustainability is for operators to acknowledge how environmental and social sustainability next practices contribute to the financial success of their operations and help prioritize action that benefits their business and the market as a whole.

### Background Information

The ultimate goal of the helicat industry is to continue to generate profits from helicopter and snowcat skiing operations. Economic sustainability is the ability of each operation to generate a functional profit now while also maintaining the ability to operate indefinitely into the future. Profitable operations produce an important economic benefit for the business, employees, suppliers and the communities in which the industry operates.

At the same time, maintaining economic sustainability is becoming more and more dependent on the ability of an organization to align itself with the social and environmental demands of its stakeholders. This is particularly the case for an industry such as helicat skiing, which relies on the use of shared Crown land and operates in direct contact with sensitive environments. By gaining the support of other land users and the greater community through sustainability efforts, an operation will create the relationships required to sustain activity within this shared environment. Increasing the social license of operations, as well as demonstrating progressive management of energy and resources, can help the industry meet and exceed the demands of stakeholders. This will help demonstrate the value of the industry to the greater economy, community and environment. As operations take steps towards next practices in the areas of social and environmental sustainability, the economic viability of each action will be an important consideration.

The purpose of this document is not to instruct operators on how to conduct business; it is to discuss the reality each operation faces when considering the large catalogue of options available when pursuing triple bottom line sustainability. The increased upfront cost of installing new sustainable options over current practices, albeit for potential long-term gains, is not just a challenge for the helicat industry but for the whole world. By acknowledging these

limitations, helicacat operators can prioritize actions that create the greatest benefits for the least cost, while meeting operational budgets. Maintaining economic sustainability while pursuing greater social and environmental sustainability is important to the overall success of each business, the industry and its stakeholders.

## **Next Practice Guidelines**

Maintaining economic sustainability includes:

- Making appropriate financial decisions to meet the goals of owners and investors
- Factoring in the ability of social and environmental sustainability efforts to increase long- and short-term financial performance
- Considering the natural capital in which the industry operates as a business stakeholder and recognizing its ability to influence long-term economic sustainability

## **Conclusion**

Economic sustainability is key to maintaining business operations. However, the industry also operates within social and environmental systems that directly contribute to its long-term economic viability. By recognizing this relationship and treating social and environmental factors as business stakeholders the industry can realize meaningful benefits..