

Regional Growth Strategy

Monitoring and Evaluating RGS Progress



Monitoring the RGS

Monitoring involves the ongoing collection of information to provide feedback on progress toward achieving the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) goals. Monitoring is part of being “*accountable for decisions and actions*,” one of the sustainability principles that the 2011 RGS is founded on. In the context of the RGS, monitoring is intended to answer the questions:

- **Are we doing what we said we would?**
- **Are we making progress on achieving the results we wanted to achieve?**

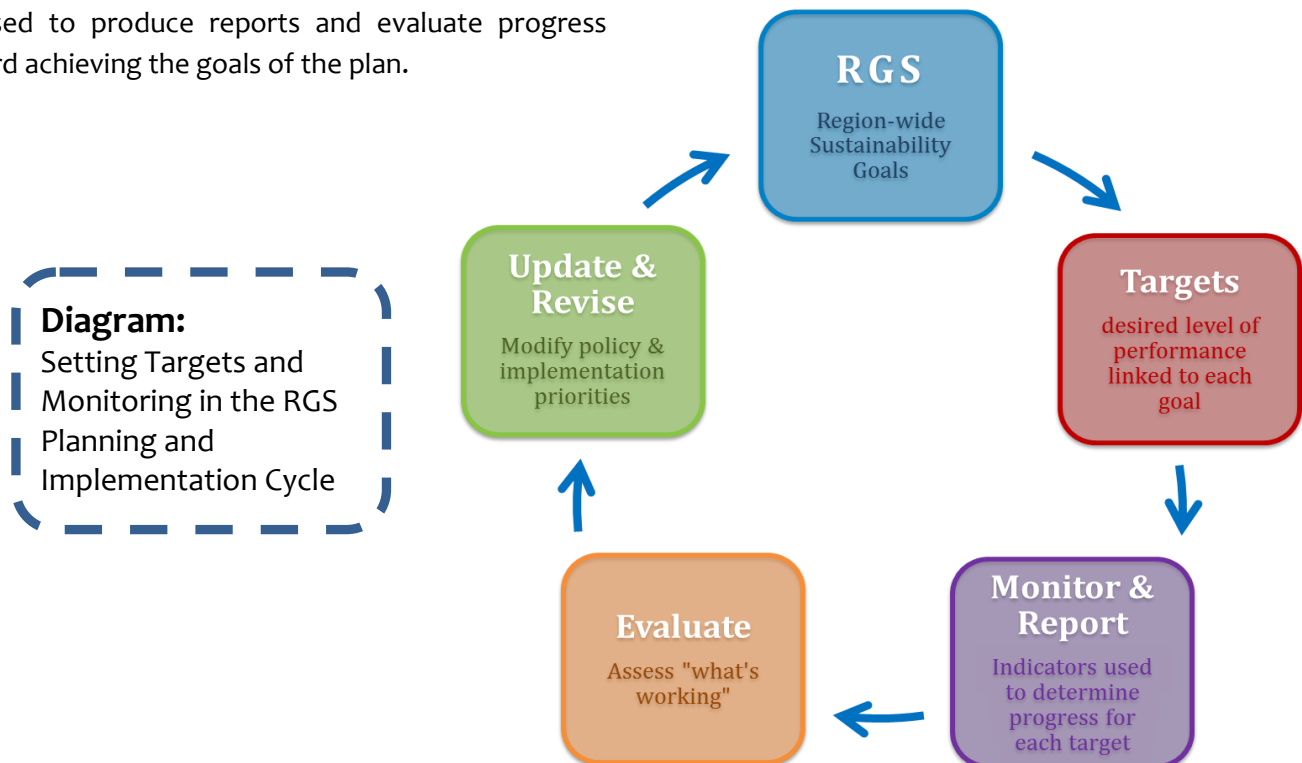
The first question can be answered by tracking specific actions taken by the RDN to implement the RGS. The second question requires a greater degree of effort to collect information or indicators showing progress toward achieving specific goals. This information can be used to produce reports and evaluate progress toward achieving the goals of the plan.

Evaluation

Through monitoring and evaluation, we aim to provide information that can help inform decisions, improve performance and achieve planned results. While monitoring tells us whether or not we are making progress towards our goals, evaluation provides an understanding of the value of the actions we are taking and the extent to which they are effective in achieving our goals. Evaluation is intended to help us answer:

- **How effective are our actions / policies in achieving the results we wanted?**
- **Do we need to adjust our actions / policies to achieve the results we want?**

The diagram below shows the relationship between monitoring and evaluating progress.



Regional Growth Strategy

RGS Monitoring History



1997 – Growth Management Plan

The original Growth Management Plan provided direction for the preparation of an annual report, including a list of performance benchmarks and progress indicators for each goal and policy of the Plan. The Plan also required a summary of actions, achievements and obstacles to improved performance. That first year, the annual report was an administrative document that described key projects completed to implement the Growth Management Plan.

1998 – 2002 Performance Review Committee

The Performance Review Committee for the Growth Management Plan was established in 1998 to prepare a program to monitor effectiveness and implementation of the Plan. The committee produced reports in 1998 and 1999 in conformance with the direction to review the annual accomplishments and implementation for each goal and policy of the Plan. The committee's third report in 2001 included for the first time 32 indicators to monitor progress toward the goals of the Growth Management Plan; however, these indicators were never used.

2003 – Regional Growth Strategy

The 2003 Regional Growth Strategy did not provide direction for monitoring its goals and policies. Following the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy, reports were prepared for 2001 – 2002 and for 2003 – 2004 to measure the progress on achieving the goals of the Regional Growth Strategy. The reports provided a summary of the achievements and challenges for the RDN and member local governments.

2003 – 2007 State of Sustainability / Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee

The RDN initiated the State of Sustainability project in 2003 to both undertake a comprehensive monitoring report and make recommendations for how the sustainability of the region could be improved. A new Regional Growth Management Advisory Committee refined the existing list of indicators and provided more opportunity for public involvement in the monitoring process. This was a one time process that occurred over several years to deepen the understanding of the sustainability of the region and highlight the changes needed. In 2004, the committee held a public workshop to obtain feedback on characteristics of a sustainable region that would assist in developing indicators to measure sustainability. The committee selected 41 indicators based on public engagement which was incorporated into the extensive report *'Prospering Today, Protecting Tomorrow: The State of Sustainability of the Regional District of Nanaimo'* produced in 2006. The committee held a second public workshop in 2007 to discuss the outcome of the monitoring project and to make recommendations for how the sustainability of the region could be improved. The recommendations made up the report *'Prospering Today, Protecting Tomorrow: Recommendations for a Sustainable Future.'* This report included specific recommendations for changes to the RGS to incorporate sustainability.

2011—Regional Growth Strategy

The 2012 annual monitoring report was prepared following the RGS review, and identified actions taken by the RDN or member municipalities that were consistent with the goals of the RGS.

