

# Reaching 2025 Group

## 4/5/2023 Meeting Summary

### In attendance:

1. Katheryn Barnhart, EPA
2. Gregory Barranco, EPA
3. Kandis Boyd, EPA
4. Sarah Brzezinski, EPA
5. Sean Corson, NOAA
6. Dinorah Dalmasy, MDE
7. Mariah Davis, Choose Clean Water Coalition
8. Rachel Felver, ACB
9. Mark Hoffman, Chesapeake Bay Commission
10. Sarah Lane, DNR
11. Julie Lawson, DOEE
12. Peter Marx, Choose Clean Water Coalition
13. Kevin McLean, DEQ
14. Dave Montali
15. Alisha Mulkey, MDA
16. Lucinda Power, EPA
17. Martha Shimpkin, EPA
18. Virginia Thompson, EPA
19. Bo Williams, EPA

### Action Items/Decisions:

- Team members are encouraged to review the full [Timeline Document](#) and the [Reaching 2025 Outline](#), and to send their questions, comments, and feedback to members of the drafting team: Sean Corson, Carin Bisland, Rachel Felver, and Katheryn Barnhart
- Sarah Brzezinski will send out a Doodle Poll for each subsequent meeting after mid-April to identify a time when team members can convene. Team members are encouraged to respond with their availability to attend future meetings.
- Decision: the drafting team will send portions of the report to the Reaching 2025 Group for feedback as they become available.
- Team members are encouraged to provide drafting team members Sean Corson, Carin Bisland, Rachel Felver, and Katheryn Barnhart with feedback on the Outcome Template that was presented during this meeting.

### Meeting Summary:

#### **Public Process:**

- Recognizing the importance of public transparency, and having heard from multiple constituents on the importance of public engagement, Sean Corson commented on the Reaching 2025 Group's commitment to transparency and the public process.
- The Reaching 2025 Group has ensured representation from non-profits and non-governmental groups, such as the Choose Clean Water Coalition. The team also has representation from the Chesapeake Bay Commission. Additionally, Sean Corson extended an open invitation for representatives from such groups to invite people they feel could be key to Reaching 2025 Conversations to participate in future team meetings, which are open to the public.
  - When documents are sent to the Management Board for review, the Reaching 2025 Group also intends to make them available to groups like the Choose Clean Water Coalition.
  - It was also suggested to that time could be set aside after Sean Corson's updates at Management Board meetings to allow for comment and specific input on the strategy and content presented.
- In support of public and broader stakeholder participation, Reaching 2025 Group meetings virtual login credentials will be posted on the Chesapeake Bay Program's Meeting Calendar.
- A public comment period is being planned for the Reaching 2025 report.
- This portion of the meeting concluded with a reiteration of this team's intention to promote transparency and engagement in Reaching 2025 discussions.

#### **Timeline Review:**

- Sean Corson led a walkthrough and discussion of the proposed Reaching 2025 timeline, detailed in the [Timeline Document](#). This timeline was established to enable the Reaching 2025 Group to meet CBP Partnership deadlines.
- Overall, it was proposed that the Reaching 2025 Group meet every other week to provide feedback on plans and materials produced by the Drafting Team, which includes Sean Corson, Carin Bisland, Rachel Felver, and Katheryn Barnhart.
  - Bi-weekly group meetings will be particularly useful for gathering feedback and brainstorming ideas of what should be included in each section.
- Key dates specifically brought to the attention of the Reaching 2025 Group were:
  - April 21: Templates to flesh out the Reaching 2025 report will be sent to Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)
    - The 31 outcome template pages will celebrate successes and highlight some recommendations for how we can move forward between now and 2025
  - May 19: Templates returned from SMEs to the drafting team for collation and editing
    - The editing team will begin collating filled out outcome templates and give them an overarching editorial voice for consistency
  - July 13: Management Board approval of the report
  - July-Aug: 30-day public comment period concurrent with PSC review
    - A concurrent public comment period and PSC review is suggested to ensure that the team meets necessary deadlines for the EC meeting
    - Comment: The EC planning committee is currently meeting. Carin is working to determine the appropriate level of review needed for sending the document to EC members. This will drive the public comment period as well. Stay tuned.

- September 26: Final PSC approval of the report and recommendations
  - October: EC presentation of the Reaching 2025 Report and Communications Strategy
- Concerns were expressed about the tight turnaround of only about a week to develop recommendations after the outcome attainability documents are received from the SMEs.
  - Responses to this concern highlighted the idea that there is likely not going to be substantial changes to outcome attainability between now and 2025, agreement that has formed around accelerating progress towards certain outcomes, such as Wetlands, and the intention to discuss climate change and the incorporation of DEI into Partnership efforts. The report will aim to provide an honest assessment of if we are going to meet outcomes by 2025
- A concern was voiced that there is no call in the EC Charge to begin crafting a new agreement.
  - A response to this comment, supported by several additional group members, recognized that the while some outcomes are tied to 2025 deadlines, the commitment to the Partnership does not end in 2025.
  - An additional response highlighted that the Reaching 2025 group is closely focused on how the Partnership brings existing outcomes to 2025. A focus for the Beyond 2025 group will likely include grappling with either having a new agreement or amending the agreement. These conversations are not within the scope of the Reaching 2025 group.
- ACTION: Members were asked follow-up with Sean Corson if they would like to provide additional feedback on the timeline
- Rachel Felver and Sean Corson reiterated that Reaching 2025 is a deadline-driven process with time limits. They proposed two options for providing documents to group for review:
  - Option 1: the drafting team can send portions of the report to the Reaching 2025 Group for feedback as they become available.
  - Option 2: the drafting team can send the whole report to the Reaching 2025 Group when it is fully assembled for the MB. It was noted that a short turnaround would likely be required to
- Accordingly, they asked the team's preference for a longer review period for piecemeal portions of the report, or a shorter review of the whole document.
- DECISION: Several members, from multiple organizations and jurisdictions, voiced support for Option 1, noting that a benefits of reviewing portions of the report as they become available include having more time for both the document review and the ability to provide feedback while the document is still being drafted.
  - No group members voiced opposition to this strategy.

#### **Document Outline Review:**

- Sean Corson reviewed the [CBP Reaching 2025 Outline](#) with team members. Feedback and questions from this conversation are highlighted below.
- Several comments related to the transition from Reaching 2025 to Beyond 2025 were made:
  - A possible recommendation was to mention 2025 in the Executive Summary, explain that the current report does not address Beyond 2025, but rather feeds into the ongoing process that the partnership is undertaking to set the positive path forward beyond 2025.
  - Some concerns have been expressed that Section 5 leans too far into Beyond 2025.

- Responses highlighted that a great deal of progress has been made in the past five years in the areas of Science and Monitoring. While this may significantly impact where the Partnership goes Beyond 2025, Section 5 would seek to provide an overview of the topics. In this way, it would tee-up some of the issues for the Beyond 2025 group.
- Additionally, ecosystem services were offered up for potential inclusion in the report as an example of the importance of a cross-outcome focus, but it was acknowledged that this topic may not fit with the other topics, such as CESR, being highlighted in Section 5.
  - Response: When the drafting team has prepared the Science and Monitoring Section 5, this one type of feedback that would be helpful from the Reaching 2025 Group. If there is something that a member strongly feels is missing, it would be great if they can draft a couple of sentences to submit for consideration by the group.
- Question: Will the need for expanded investments be included anywhere in the report?
  - Response: If there are 6 or 8 outcomes that really need expanded investment – if that is something that comes out of the data and meetings with SMEs – then it is the sort of recommendation would be included in the Executive Summary
- ACTION: If team members have questions or comments about the outline reviewed during this meeting, please follow-up with Drafting Team

#### **Outcome Template Review:**

- Katheryn Barnhart shared a draft template of the Outcome Attainability section of the report and reviewed the structure and content the drafting team intends to collect with the broader Reaching 2025 Group. Team input was solicited.
- A conversation about the formatting, placement and optics of the Outcome Outlook section of the report took place. Key conversation topics and questions included:
  - Should the Outlook be highlighted so prominently?
    - While the team doesn't want to try to hide when outcomes have not been met, there is a risk that having only this text in bold may cause some readers to simply glance at it and move on.
    - If an outcome is off course, can the report equally highlight what has been accomplished and what is needed to get the outcome back on course?
      - Response: the intention is to highlight both the pros and cons. The report will include text related to bringing outcomes back on course and will also recognize challenges that have hindered progress towards achieving outcomes.
    - Can an overall disclaimer be added to say that the outlook is a bit reductive and that there is important context that needs to be considered for each outcome?
    - Just because we are off course for an outcome doesn't necessarily mean that we are failing – there has been great progress some areas

- The communications strategy will also seek to address some of the issues and challenges related outcome attainability and the context in which outcome attainability should be discussed.
  - During the report drafting process and leveraging existing bodies of knowledge, the drafting team intends to identify common factors that influence outcome attainability across goals, such as clear federal and state champions, dedicated funding, and dedicated staff time.
- ACTION: If there is any follow up questions or feedback on this draft template, please reach out to Sean, Carin, Rachel and Katheryn.