

**2023 SRS Biennial Meeting
May 11-12, 2023**

Chesapeake Bay Café Day 2 Question #4 Summary

★ Denotes multiple tables or persons at the same table repeating or prioritizing the same item.

(#) Denotes the table number(s) that addressed that question.

**Additional Information for the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee (EC Charge #1-9)
Key Takeaways**

- **Goals and outcomes need to be clarified**, have less ambiguity, be measurable, and have more aggressive targets and implementation. Further, the term water quality causes a lot of divides. (4)
- Only establish **quantifiable outcomes** when we have commitments to establishing common terms and vernacular, accounting system, personnel, and funding. (virtual 1)
- Focus on **core endpoint interests**. (virtual 1)
- **Aspirational inspirational goals versus practical achievable goals** are OK but these are often best evaluated qualitatively. (virtual 1)
- **Refine outcomes outside of TMDL water quality**, if not quantifiable refine language to be more specific so that measurement of progress is more doable and practical. (virtual 1)
- **Rebuilding/reimagining the partnership**. Chesapeake Bay Program should include full-time representatives, a clear team that can represent their state. In addition, we need to be more inclusive and with a deeper reach within communities. Digging into the state and regional level with NGO's who can work with the locals will improve visibility and help with relaying messaging. (8)
- **Consider the structure of our partnership and our SRS process**. We need to be more collaborative, efficient, and less bureaucratic. (4)
- Restructure the **Management Board**. (virtual 1)
- **Ensure the organizations members reflect the demographics** of the watershed. (virtual 1)
- Different structure that includes **more representative leadership voices**. (virtual 1)
- We need **different voices in the conversation**. (12)
- **Expand adaptive management**. (virtual 1)
- Push the **SRS system** down into the GITs and use summary stats for the Management Board. (virtual 1)
- Focus on **integrating more local partnerships and community organizations** (e.g., children, families, women, men, recreational users, hunters, fishermen, those with historical knowledge). (virtual 1)
- **Convey are work and progress in plain language** and look at ways to **increase accessibility** for things that matter. (4)
- **Better communication and collaboration among the partnership**. Siloed groups, not moving in the same direction. (8)
- Address **how what we do impacts communities**. This includes knowing where the neighborhoods are located and mapping spending on projects to where jobs are created. (8)
- Provide **the same weight to people** as is given to the environment. (virtual 1)
- Create **authentic partnerships**. (virtual 1)
- Evaluate and consider **breaking the TMDL out from the CBP daily management**. (virtual 1)

- **More transparency on where funding goes and opportunities to provide input on targeting resources.** (12)
- **Include stressors not limited to N, P, sediment.** A prioritized group of **toxic contaminants** should be considered. (virtual 1)

4.0 Additional Information for the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee (EC Charge #1-9)

4.1 What do you care most about that you want the Beyond 2025 Steering Committee to know, focus on, or include in the planning for their work? (EC Charge #1-9)

Research & Focus

- Valuable to research and have cutting-edge technologies but **pursuing research for the sake of research** should not be the goal of the Chesapeake Bay Program. We don't always need to be on the cutting edge – there are efficiencies in established technologies. (4) ★
- More **focus on adult literacy**. This is equally as important, if not more so than student literacy, because adults are landowners and make decisions about property. (4)
- Continue to **shift our focus more toward monitoring actual results**. Make sure we're focusing on on-the-ground impacts. (4)

Collaboration and Partnership

- Need **more intra-CBP collaboration across outcomes** (which we termed “cross-GIT pollination”). (4) ★
- **How do we create a more inclusive partnership that uplifts stakeholders?** Bring partners in from NGOs that can form stakeholder advisory committees (more granular than LGAC, CAC). Create inclusivity will bring in new ideas. (8)
- **Partners working in parallel of each with other**, not connected should be wheel and spokes two-way communication channels. Connects to inclusivity and deeper dive of conversations/ knowledge. CBP should feel more like a water-shed wide organization. Make the CBP something Governors/Mayors are proud to be of, asking partners what the CBP can do for them. Supporting our partners work instead of creating duplicate positions. How does our work impact people and communities? Learn from each other, build on our expertise. (8)
- **More collaboration:** A partnership office that has dedicated full-time jurisdictional representatives/staff. Maybe an employee exchange. Separate CBP staff from EPA Region 3, so the focus is on partnership, not on regulation. ★ (4)
- Ensure the **organizations members reflect numerically the demographics of the watershed** call it. (virtual 1)
- Create **authentic partnerships** so we aren't just communicating with folks but working to understand shared priorities. (virtual 1)
- Establish a **road team to travel the watershed and participate in community visioning discussions** to evaluate current and suggest new goals to focus on. (virtual 1)
- There should be a **focus on integrating more local partnerships and community organizations** to make our work more relevant. (virtual 1) ★
- Read the document “Retrospective on Lessons Learned from the Chesapeake Bay Program Strategy Review System’s 3rd Cycle with Suggested Adaptations to Address Issues” shared with Biennial Meeting attendees. It has lessons learned from the Coordinators, Staffers, and SRS Planning Team and suggestions to consider the **“secret sauce” for the partnerships success**. (8)

Communication

- **Keep sharing success stories.** Need a communication machine that can push these out regularly. Make sure this is a consistent thing, not just around anniversaries. Pushes the value of what we're doing. (4)

General Recommendations

- **Don't be afraid to change directions.** (4)
- **Focus on incremental and thoughtful change.** Rapid change may not be digestible. (4)
- Goal: **Build trust.** (4)
- We are **stronger together.** ★ (12)

Specific Recommendations

- **Establish carbon sequestration targets** and then figure out how to measure progress. (4)
- Some participants felt there was a need for **finer scale models**, so we can better track impact. Disagreement on this at the table. (4)
- Scheduling **voluntary trainings is not going to get us there** with DEIJ goals. (4)
- 2025 deadline is arbitrary. We've done this for 40 years, **let's plan for the next 40.** (4)
- **Streamline grant processes** to be more accessible. (4)
- Focus on how to **reduce land use change.** (8)
- **Credit conservation/protection.** (8) ★
- **Credit maintenance and protection.** (8) ★
- **Staffer representation or early career representation in the Beyond 2023 Steering Committee.** They are the ones that will be carrying through this next Agreement. Staffers shouldn't be the ones writing the minutes for this group. (12)
- **Incorporate DEIJ and Climate Change** into the soul of Beyond 2025 and not as an add on and intentionally build trust among steering committee members. (12) ★
- Restoration of the Bay beyond 2025 should include stressors **not limited to N, P, sediment.** A prioritized group of toxic contaminants should be considered. (virtual 1)

Governance

- **Make the Executive Council less opaque and un-engaged.** (8) ★
- **Restructure the Management Board** to have deputy secretary level representatives who can speak across multiple issues. (virtual 1)
- **Revisit the structure of the partnership.** We've done a lot of splitting, which makes it easy to get in silos. It also makes it hard to explain CBP to the public. Need to pull some things back together. One example given was GIT6 as one workgroup that reports to the MB. (4) ★
- **Restructure silos** now. We don't need to restructure completely to break down silos. (12)

People Focused

- We need to have **aggressive targets and implementation** which is necessary because of climate change. (4) ★
- **Why are we not focused on protecting people first?** All aspects of Chesapeake Bay Agreement should be more people focused. For example, operationalize DEIJ plan more, have greater reliance on social science, and have social scientists on CBPO staff. (8) ★
- **Consider human indicators.** (12)
- Providing the **same weight to people as is given to the environment.** (virtual 1)

- **Prioritizing community** (children, families, women, men, recreational users, hunters, fishermen, those with historical knowledge) as key stakeholders. (virtual 1) ★
- Consider different structure that includes **more representative leadership voices** for each outcome, different leaders are assigned different outcomes. (virtual 1)
- **Rethink our “iconic species” to speak more broadly to people** throughout the entirety of the watershed. Dairy farmers, for example, may not be connected to oysters. Use the social science resources to better help determine what resonates with people. (4)
- **Climate mitigation as an engine of support for people centered outcomes**, e.g., EPA ORD project in Crisfield, MD using blue carbon to support erosion control mechanisms. (8)

Process

- **Expanded adaptive management.** (virtual 1)
- Push the **SRS system down into the GITs** and use summary stats for the Management Board. (virtual 1) ★

Vision, Goals & Outcomes

- **Create shared vision and challenges.** To create that challenge, we need to include those who work in the field of ag, aquaculture, etc., local leaders, youth (i.e. early career, junior level), diverse and vulnerable communities. Including these groups that are normally not included will help make one integrated system. Throughout the process of this shared vision beyond 2025 we need transparency and accountability and engagement; systems approach; communication. Target not just water quality but leverage with other outcomes. ★ (12)
- **Expand sustainable fisheries beyond oysters** to focus more broadly on mussels, clams, and scallops. Mussels in particular are an untapped resource. Doing this in the future would build on the success we’ve had with oysters. (4)
- Goals based on what is needed not was is easy, but **informed by the changing realities** of the future Bay. (8)
- **Focus on core endpoint** interests when setting goals and building outcomes to achieve them. Often these are related to health, prosperity, jobs, income, recreation, etcetera: a focus on more collaboration between work groups as needed. (virtual 1)
- **Aspirational inspirational goals versus practical achievable goals** are OK but these are often best evaluated qualitatively. (virtual 1) ★
- Only establish **quantifiable outcomes when we have commitments** to establishing common terms and vernacular, accounting system, personnel, and funding. (virtual 1) ★
- **Refine outcomes outside of TMDL water quality**, if not quantifiable refine language to be more specific so that measurement of progress is more doable and practical. (virtual 1)
- Seriously evaluate and consider **breaking the TMDL out from the CBP daily management**. The regulatory versus non regulatory split is a tough balance and adequate staff support is not apparent. (virtual 1)
- **Rethink goals in terms of climate change.** We don’t have 40 more years to make another shift. Can also include it in ways that relates to other priorities such as flooding and urban heat.

4.2 Where are some areas for meaningful change that need to occur? (EC Charge #1-9)

Goals & Outcomes

- **Be realistic in what goals we are setting** and whether its manageable with the capacity we have. (4)

- **Need clarification of outcomes and goals.** Goals we are working with leave much ambiguity and can't be measured. This is causing lagging outcomes to occur. (4) ★
- Who would be opposed to **having clean water as a goal?** This is something people can visualize whereas water quality sounds like a technical term. (4)
- Ensure we **have baselines if we are going to set quantifiable goals.** If we don't, we're setting ourselves up to fail. (4)
- Size versus effectiveness. The larger you get, the less effective you become. **Need to scale back/consolidate outcomes.** (4)
- **Consolidate outcomes** – find the median between minor tinker and fundamental change. (8)

Governance

- **The PSC and MB are too heavy of an emphasis on water quality.** Need for non-WQ representation on these groups. (4)
- Some felt that the **Management Board is non-responsive and that workgroups don't receive sufficient time to bring issues in front of the Management Board for discussion.** Trying to boil complex issues down into 15-minute presentations when people have invested hundreds of hours isn't helpful. (4)
- Many workgroup members **don't know who their Management Board representative is.** (4)
- Some felt that we need more staffers while others felt that we need to combine workgroups to **ensure we have adequate staffing capacity.** (4)
- Rethink and connect the **governance leadership structure.** Our priorities won't change if what and who we are held accountable don't change. (8)
- Streamline organization and processes to free us up to actually focus on getting the work done (what we identified in our action plans). (8)

Process

- SRS is a very bureaucratic process. As a result, the bureaucracy overwhelms the intended impact. **Restructuring of SRS for allowing space to implement CAPs.** (4) ★

Engagement & Communications

- Need to **listening sessions that include current stakeholders, GITs and workgroups, and communities.** Feedback is coming in from workgroups that their outcomes don't relate to the work they are doing, so they aren't invested. The outcomes were handed down from a high level. Go down to a lower level (GITs, communities) and hear what they want. We don't yet seem to have them integrated into the process. (4)
- Encourage **more engagement** than communication. Engagement is 2-way vs communication 1-way. Empower people again. (12)
- **Two-way communications and collaborative conversations.** (8)
- Clarify, but **broaden communications**, as well as the role of the central communications office which needs more engagement. We need science and tools communicators and more communication bodies. (8)
- Start thinking about words we use to describe things - **plain language.** (4) ★
- Build **networks of translators to help convey connections and help locals understand** meaning as it relates to them. (8)
- **Thoughtful representation based on needed perspectives**, not checklist representation. Not the same old voices. (12)

Funding & Resources

- Time to **rethink distribution of funding** and base budget and time for staff to provide input. There used to be a CBP budget steering committee that would discuss where the funding is going and discussion on where other funding should go. Need transparency! (12) ★
- **Make sure resources can be accessed by those that need it.** There are steps we can take to remove barriers. Example is that we've done presentations in equitable grantmaking. Our processes should come to meet people where they are at. (4)

Partnership & Stakeholders

- **Partnership power dynamics/hierarchies** and who is getting paid to do what work and who the decision makers are. (8) ★
- Go from current **watershed wide perspective to local perspective** – consider stakeholders values. Remember we are stakeholders too (12) ★

DEIJ and Climate Change

- Need for a **new coalition/nonprofit/NGO designed to meet DEIJ needs** in Chesapeake (CCWC for DEIJ). (8)
- **Incorporate climate and DEIJ across our work**, not siloed alone (12)
- Why are we **not focused on protecting people first**? All aspects of Chesapeake Bay Agreement should be more people focused. For example, operationalize DEIJ plan more, greater reliance on social science, have socials on CBPO staff. (8) ★

General Recommendations

- **Be thoughtful and intentional** – needed if you amend or start fresh. Most think that we should start fresh with a new agreement – more refine and amend. (12) Specific Recommendations
- **Focus on needs first** – let drive the action (12)
- **Allow multiple reasons** for our WHY. (12)
- Consider **what we can do and where we can add value** in addition to just what we'd like to do and see. (12)
- Hearing a lot about needing to **increase accessibility for things that matter.** (4) ★

Specific Recommendations

- The **term water quality is causing a lot of divides.** It would be better to use the term clean water. (4) ★
- **Rethink indicator species** currently used, why are other not considered? We have built up monitoring to have all these indicators, are we using them to the best of our ability in the CBWA? (8)
- **Use the system to change** (where needed) the system. The 2014 Agreement foresaw this moment. Governance allows us to edit and keep to agreement (even large changes). Agreement has been modified since 2014 multiple times, half of outcomes do not have a 2025 deadline. (8)
- **Suggest name change “Chesapeake Watershed Trust or Partnership.”** (8)