

Achieving the 2024 EC Charge: **Governance, Structure, and Process**

GIT6 Update to the Principals' Staff Committee

March 28, 2025

Actions and Decisions

Discussion of Structure, Governance, and Operational Management Framework

Decision: GIT 6 will coordinate an informal process and develop a draft scope of work to accomplish the **Executive Council Charge** to simplify and streamline the structure and governance process for the partnership. GIT 6 will also pursue options to standardize partnership meeting processes as well as action and decision documentation.

“A simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments in an effective, efficient, and inclusive manner. It is the expectation of the Chesapeake Executive Council that the revised partnership structure and processes will be more inclusive of all communities and more manageable for partnership staff.”

Updated Guidance from the Management Board (03/06)

- “develop a single one-pager that highlights the top 3-5 priorities that would inform the scope of work for the partnership to address the structure, process, and governance component of the 2024 Executive Council Charge.”
- “present the contents of the one-pager [at the 3/27 MB Meeting], highlighting the top level 3-5 priorities. The Management Board will then determine if this work under GIT 6 should continue or if an alternative approach should be pursued. “

Addressing the Charge

1. GIT 6 hosted kick off meeting on Feb. 3rd
 - 42 individuals expressed interest in participating in further discussion.
 - Determined to break into three teams to allow for more manageable discussion.
 - Teams: Structure, Process, and Governance met twice between then and now.
2. Three teams listed and synthesized key issues utilizing existing resources and materials of the partnership.
 - Key issues submitted by team participants.
 - Categorized and reviewed issues to identify critical subject areas to address.
 - Prioritized and detailed subject areas at the team level for GIT6 prioritization.
3. Reconvened full GIT 6 on March 24th
 - Prioritized subject areas identified by each team to top five, high-level priorities for MB and PSC consideration at their March meetings.
 - Developed “One-Pager” based on these high-level priorities.
4. Provide Update at March 27th MB and March 28th PSC Meetings for further direction.

Quick Note...

- In addition to the following priorities and as identified in the charge:
 - GLT 6 agrees there are opportunities to improve consistency in meeting processes, such as: collaborative agenda setting, standardizing meeting operations, including public feedback and decision documentation.
 - This could be accomplished in the short-term.

Priority: Clarifying membership roles, responsibilities, and definitions of Chesapeake Bay Program groups to strengthen accountability and adaptability

Anticipated Result: Simplified and clear organizational structure that withstands change, supports adaptive decision-making, and ensures responsiveness to the full range of program outcomes.

- Balance and clearly define signatory and non-signatory roles and ensure equitable participation, particularly for tribal governments, federal agencies, advisory committees and external stakeholders.
- Ensure the Management Board has a more distributed structure with representation from appropriate partners.
- Establish an accountability framework and arbiter for all outcomes.

Priority: Revising the Strategy Review System to ensure regular assessment, adaptability in tactics and goals, and clear alignment of actions and responsibilities

Anticipated Result: Focused process that fosters continuous learning and provides an accountability framework that supports the unique needs of the partnership.

- Need for a simplified, streamlined and flexible review process, integration of diverse outcomes, and clearer alignment of resource needs and allocations, implementation actions and their anticipated results.
- Expand the adaptive management process beyond single loop learning (changing tactics (e.g., SRS)), to double loop learning (changing approach) and triple loop learning (changing goals) for all levels of the partnership.

Priority: Refining decision-making processes to ensure broad representation, agile science-based decision making, and integrative participatory practices

Anticipated Result: Enhanced accountability and streamlined decision-making that will ensure effective investment and adherence to shared principles in the Chesapeake Bay Program.

- More structured and inclusive decision-making process.
- Should consensus be sought upfront, how to streamline prolonged debates, how to revisit decision previously made, and if the decision-making tools necessary to understand tradeoffs exist?
- Ensure federal and state agencies, as well as external stakeholders, are fully engaged in decision making.

Priority: Strengthening communication, engagement and integration across the Program to build trust, align goals, and enhance coordination among program units

Anticipated Result: Enhanced operational efficiency, improved decision-making, and collaborative responses in tackling environmental issues to accelerate progress in achieving the program's goals.

- Improve communication within and across different partnership levels and externally.
- Better integrate between organizational groups to reduce silos and improve coordination.
- Increase data accessibility and engage a broader network of networks.

Priority: Establishing a logical framework and governance structure to produce results that align with the goals and outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

Anticipated Result: A simplified logic model and clear guidelines for updating the Watershed Agreement.

- Develop a governance structure that aligns with Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Goals/Outcomes using a logic model or theory of change.
- Provide a more transparent method for aligning Partner priorities, establishing programmatic initiatives, and identifying and allocating resources.

Process for Implementing the Dec 10, 2024 Charting a Course Beyond 2025 Charge

March 27	PSC/MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MB completes Outcomes Assessment, flagging gaps and possible novel outcomes; discusses possible changes to Goals based on Outcome status; discusses structure and governance strategy and progress.
March 28	PSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve proposed changes to Vision, Preamble, and Principles; review MB Outcomes update and provide feedback; discuss process for addressing public feedback.
April 3	ACs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Advisory Committee briefing on current status of Outcomes.
April 10	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve final Outcome Disposition and novel Outcomes; begin updates to revise Outcome language.
May 7-8 Retreat	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize recommended Outcome revisions; discuss any changes necessary for Goals and Management Strategies based on Outcomes status; discuss any changes necessary for structure and governance work.
May 23	PSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review MB's recommended Outcome revisions; discuss possible changes to Goals and Management Strategies; discuss any changes necessary for MB structure and governance work. Meeting follow-up: Chair's team will manage and circulate feedback.
June 12	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review PSC direction and approve final recommendations for public feedback.
Week of June 23	PSC/MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short meeting for PSC to approve all <i>Watershed Agreement</i> changes for public release.
July 1	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60-day public feedback period begins.
July 10	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure and governance work.
August 14	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial recommendations for structure and governance work; initial feedback review from partner engagement period.
August 20	PSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review MB's structure and governance recommendations, provide feedback; initial review of feedback from partner engagement period.
September 1	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclusion of public feedback period.
September 11	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to review, organize and address public feedback.
October 9	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose changes to <i>Watershed Agreement</i> revisions based on public feedback; final structure and governance recommendations.
November 6	MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve final <i>Watershed Agreement</i> revisions and final structure and governance recommendations in preparation for EC meeting.
November 18 (tentative)	PSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve final <i>Watershed Agreement</i> revisions and final structure and governance recommendations in preparation for EC meeting.

Proposed Next Steps

- Collecting meeting operations' best practices from staffers and coordinators for MB and PSC consideration.
- Review of other regional partnership programs and restoration initiatives to gain insights for MB and PSC consideration and Scope of Work development.
- Develop Draft Scope(s) of Work (for potential 3rd party and/or in-house evaluation)
 - Partnership roles/responsibilities
 - SRS revisions
 - Decision-making process
 - Logic Framework and Governance Structure
 - Strengthening communications/engagement

Discussion Questions

- Feedback / agreement on priorities and proposed next steps?
- Who is going to lead and do this work?
- Is there a value of having a third party take a piece of this work? If so, how to fund/support?
- Is there value at looking at other geographic programs for logic framework and structure?