



Outcome Review Meeting

Management Board
March 13, 2025

Throughout 2025, the Chesapeake Bay Program will be revising the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* and restructuring the governance and decision-making processes of the partnership. The signatories of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* include the states of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia, the District of Columbia, the tri-state legislative Chesapeake Bay Commission and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of the federal government agencies that participate in the Chesapeake Bay Program.

On March 13, 2025, the Management Board held its third and final outcome review meeting, where 13 outcome leads presented recommendations on whether their outcome should be consolidated, reduced, updated, removed or replaced. The following provides a summary of the discussions that took place for each outcome presented at the March 13 Management Board meeting.

All 31 outcomes will be reviewed at the [March 27, 2025 Management Board meeting](#) and recommendations for revisions will be forwarded to the Principals' Staff Committee for discussion at their meeting on [March 28, 2025](#). The information presented below should not be considered final or a decision.

Black Duck

Current Outcome Language

- By 2025, restore, enhance and preserve wetland habitats that support a wintering population of 100,000 Black ducks, a species representative of the health of tidal marshes across the watershed. Refine population targets through 2025 based on best available science.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Black Duck](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Black Duck Action Team recommends **reclassifying** the Black Duck Outcome to an output under the Wetlands Outcome.
- Recommend broadening to incorporate other waterbirds, not just Black ducks.
- [Black Duck Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New York and Virginia supported the recommendation to reclassify the outcome as an output under the Wetlands Outcome.



- The Chesapeake Bay Commission and EPA recommended reclassifying the outcome as an indicator.
 - EPA noted that increased Black duck and waterfowl populations in general serve as an important marker of success for enhancing wetland habitat.
 - The Chesapeake Bay Commission recommended reclassifying as an indicator over an output as outputs seem to be the direct product of wetland restoration activities and enhancing waterbird populations would be an additional benefit.
- Pennsylvania and West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in this outcome.
- Pennsylvania raised the question of how much effort it would take to track waterbirds on a broader scale (i.e., watershed-wide).

Climate Adaptation

Current Outcome Language

- Continually pursue, design and construct restoration and protection projects to enhance the resiliency of Bay and aquatic ecosystems from the impacts of coastal erosion, coastal flooding, more intense and more frequent storms and sea level rise.
- Chesapeake Progress: [Climate Adaptation](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Climate Resiliency Workgroup recommends updating the Climate Adaptation Outcome.
- Recommend updating the outcome with clearer language and time bound objectives that the partnership could incrementally work toward.
- The Climate Adaptation Outcome is currently housed under the Scientific, Technical Assessment and Report (STAR) Team. Recommend moving outcome to a different location in the partnership organization chart.
- Possible options for reframing the outcome include:
 - Incorporating place-based language and/or establishing strategies with time-bound objectives to address or minimize impacts of changing environmental conditions.
 - Include a menu of adaptation options that are developed for forecasted problems with different future timeframes (i.e., 2050, 2075, 2100) and measure progress by how many of these strategies are implemented within different timescales (i.e., 10, 15 years).
- [Climate Adaptation Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, District of Columbia, EPA, Maryland, New York and Virginia support updating the outcome.



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- Delaware and the District of Columbia noted they need a better understanding of how this outcome would be implemented.
- Maryland is looking forward to seeing how the updated outcome can help jurisdictions better implement their climate projects across the watershed.
- The Chesapeake Bay Commission and Pennsylvania recommends that the updated outcome be inclusive of the entire watershed and not just focus on coastal areas.
- The Chesapeake Bay Commission notes that it may be more appropriate to keep this outcome qualitative given the role of the partnership.
- West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in this outcome.
- Recommended that outcome name be changed to remove “climate”.

Climate Monitoring and Assessment

Current Outcome Language

- Continually monitor and assess the trends and likely impacts of changing climatic and sea level conditions on the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, including the effectiveness of restoration and protection policies, programs and projects.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Climate Monitoring and Assessment](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Climate Resiliency Workgroup recommends replacing the Climate Monitoring and Assessment Outcome with the Climate Science Integration Outcome.
- Recommend the outcome focus on developing and implementing a climate resiliency framework that allows for the effective integration of climate science across the outcomes.
 - Would better inform the achievability of the outcomes of the outcomes in the amended Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, aid in adaptive management under changing climate conditions and ensure that outcome leads have the science needed to incorporate climate resilience in their work.
 - Allows for the partnership to have a structured process to advance progress on actions identified in the [Executive Council climate change directive](#).
- [Climate Monitoring and Assessment Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, EPA, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia support reclassifying the outcome.
 - Maryland notes that this work is still critical to the future success of the partnership, and resources and targeted assistance must be available to help make this a reality for other outcomes.
 - Pennsylvania recommends that this work needs to be inclusive of the entire watershed.



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- Virginia notes the idea of a Climate Science Integration Outcome is more like a priority project than an outcome and would like to see a stronger plan for how this work would be executed.
- The Chesapeake Bay Commission would like to see how this work could fit into the partnership structure.
- EPA recommends that a reclassified outcome could be combined with the Climate Adaptation Outcome, where the climate resiliency assessment framework could be an output and each outcome lead would be responsible for reporting on the impact of changing environmental conditions on the achievability of their work.
- Delaware supports replacing the outcome, but also would consider how this could be combined with the Climate Adaptation Outcome.
- The District of Columbia supports replacing the outcome but wonders if the climate resiliency framework can stand on its own and be applied to all outcomes.
- West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in this outcome.

Diversity

Current Outcome Language

- Identify stakeholder groups not currently represented in the leadership, decision-making or implementation of current conservation and restoration activities and create meaningful opportunities and programs to recruit and engage these new groups in the partnership's efforts.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Diversity](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Diversity Workgroup recommends replacing the Diversity Outcome with a new outcome.
- Recommend creating a Workforce Outcome that will leverage current and future jurisdiction programs to recruit, train and retain employees and employers that help the partnership meet our outcomes and build professional capacity and economic opportunity throughout the watershed.
- [Diversity Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia, EPA, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia support replacing this outcome.
- New York and West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in this outcome.
 - New York supports the need for environmental workforce capacity, training and retention.



Environmental Literacy Planning

Current Outcome Language

- Each participating Bay jurisdiction should develop a comprehensive and system approach to environmental literacy for all students in the region that includes policies, practices and voluntary metrics that support the environmental literacy Goals and Outcomes of this Agreement.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Environmental Literacy Planning](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Education Workgroup recommends updating the Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome.
- Recommend updating to reflect the current needs and priorities of state and federal agencies and other formal and nonformal education partners in the region.
- New outcome language should clarify that school districts are the unit of change for this outcome, identify and track metrics that capture a broader set of actions that indicate progress towards the outcome, and identify and measurable and realistic targets based on a review of 2015-2024 data collected through the Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool.
- [Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, District of Columbia, EPA, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia support updating this outcome.
 - EPA emphasized the need to define specific metrics under this outcome.
 - Delaware agrees that folding the Sustainable Schools Outcome into this outcome will help combine and streamline efforts.
 - The Chesapeake Bay Commission noted that it is equally important to provide actual MWEE experiences to students and support interested school districts in sustainably managing these programs.
 - Pennsylvania noted that the proposed metrics do not appear to align with the intended partnership goal of providing support to schools and recommend changing the metrics.
 - Virginia agrees there is value to Bay-wide collaboration and coordination.
- New York and West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in the outcome.

Protected Lands

Current Outcome Language



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- By 2025, protect an additional two million acres of land throughout the watershed—currently identified as high-conservation priorities at the federal, state or local level—including 225,000 acres of wetlands and 695,000 acres of forest land of highest value for maintaining water quality.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Protected Lands](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Protected Lands Workgroup recommends updating the Protected Lands Outcome.
- Recommend including language around protection as well as regional, strategic large landscape conservation efforts.
- Targets should include specific metrics that address various types of areas, such as forests, agricultural landscapes, wetlands, watersheds, urban green spaces and tribal lands.
- Will provide a more comprehensive framework to track progress across conservation efforts, helping to focus resources on high-priority areas and create stacked benefits across multiple program outcomes.
- [Protected Lands Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia, EPA, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia support the recommendation to update this outcome.
 - Delaware and Pennsylvania would like this update to include additional outputs, like agricultural lands and urban green spaces.
- West Virginia stood aside as they do not participate in this outcome currently.

Public Access Site Development

Current Outcome Language

- By 2025, add 300 new public access sites, with a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for boating, swimming and fishing, where feasible.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Public Access Site Development](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Public Access Workgroup recommends updating the Public Access Outcome.
- Recommend expanding the current scope to monitor progress using specific targets and metrics, emphasizing both water and land access sites.
- This approach will help provide a more comprehensive strategy for developing public access sites in the watershed.
- Additional metrics could include ADA/ABA accessibility, the maintenance of existing sites and net/gain loss targets.
- Updated outcome should consider the maintenance of new and existing access sites.



- [Public Access Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia, EPA, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia support updating this outcome.
 - In light of the challenges in providing access to the water, Maryland wants to ensure that work to develop and maintain these sites is retained in the outcome, even with the scope broadened to include access to land sites.
 - Pennsylvania noted that the work of the partnership to understand user group experiences, motivations and challenges contributes to the Commonwealth's ability to thoughtfully allocate resources toward supporting constituent needs and interests.
 - EPA emphasized the need to define specific access metrics within the outcome.
- West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in this outcome.

Student

Current Outcome Language

- Continually increase student's age-appropriate understanding of the watershed through participation in teacher-supported meaningful watershed educational experiences and rigorous, inquiry-based instruction, with a target of at least one meaningful watershed educational experience in elementary, middle and high school depending on available resources.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Student](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Education Workgroup recommends updating the Student Outcome.
- Recommend updating to reflect the current needs and priorities of state and federal agencies and other formal and nonformal education partners in the region.
- New outcome language should identify and track inquiry-based environmental education experiences in addition to MWEs to better understand and build upon their valuable contributions to environmental literacy, create a new indicator to track the percentage of the student population who are receiving MWEs during the K-12 experience to better align with the outcome, and identify measurable and realistic targets based on the review of data from the Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool from 2015-2024 and conversations with state leaders.
- [Student Outcome Review Two-Pager](#).

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia and Maryland support the recommendation to update this outcome.
 - EPA emphasized the need to define specific metrics under this outcome.



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- The Chesapeake Bay Commission noted that it is equally important to provide actual MWEE experiences to students and support interested school districts in sustainably managing these programs.
- Pennsylvania recommends reclassifying this outcome as an output under the Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome.
- Virginia recommends removing this outcome as the Virginia Environmental Literacy Plan is strongly oriented to the MWEE framework and progress toward this outcome is already adequately captured under other outcomes.
- New York and West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in the outcome.

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)

Current Outcome Language

- Sustain and increase the habitat benefits of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) in the Chesapeake Bay. Achieve and sustain the ultimate outcome of 185,000 acres of SAV Bay-wide necessary for a restored Bay. Progress toward this ultimate outcome will be measured against a target of 90,000 acres by 2017 and 130,000 acres by 2025.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Submerged Aquatic Vegetation \(SAV\)](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The SAV Workgroup recommends updating the SAV Outcome.
- Recommend aligning outcome with jurisdictional SAV and water clarity standards to result in a more accurate reflection of potential SAV in each Bay segment.
- This will result in a higher target SAV acreage.
- [SAV Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia support the recommendation for this outcome.
 - Virginia noted that the partnership provides critical infrastructure to support progress toward this outcome by providing tangible financial contributions, assisting with data collection, communicating findings with stakeholders and coordinating resource managers.
- Delaware, New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in this outcome.
- EPA recommends reclassifying the outcome to be an indicator or output under the current water quality outcome, as it supports efforts to meet this outcome.

Sustainable Schools



Current Outcome Language

- Continually increase the number of schools in the region that reduce the impact of their buildings and grounds on their local watershed, environment and human health through best practices, including student-led protection and restoration projects.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Sustainable Schools](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Education Workgroup recommends reclassifying the Sustainable Schools Outcome as an indicator of the Environmental Literacy Planning Outcome.
- The partnership is not currently well positioned to add significant value toward achieving the outcome as it is currently represented.
- [Sustainable Schools Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia support the recommendation to reclassify this outcome.
 - The Chesapeake Bay Commission noted that it seems prudent to reclassify this outcome as an indicator given the value this information can have in understanding and improving the partnership's environmental literacy efforts.
- New York and West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate in the outcome.

Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention

Current Outcome Language

- Continually improve practices and controls that reduce and prevent the effects of toxic contaminants below levels that harm aquatic systems and humans. Build on existing programs to reduce the amount and effects of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the Bay and watershed. Use research findings to evaluate the implementation of additional policies, programs and practices for other contaminants that need to be further reduced or eliminated.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Toxic Contaminants Workgroup recommends updating the Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome.
- Recommend updating the outcome to ensure the partnership continues to apply its expertise in water quality management to advance PCB TMDLs in the watershed to reduce PCBs and toxic contaminants in fish.
- [Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

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- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia support the recommendation for this outcome.
 - The Chesapeake Bay Commission would like to see flexibility within this outcome to work on PCBs, PFAS, microplastics and other emerging contaminants as identified by the partnership as a priority.
 - Delaware recommends including the Plastic Pollution Action Team under this outcome and possibly consolidating or streamlining the two toxics outcomes.
 - Maryland agrees with expanding the scope to include emerging contaminants.
 - New York agrees with including additional emerging contaminants.
 - Pennsylvania would like the outcome to be more clear in what it's seeking to achieve.
- Virginia recommends removing this outcome as existing Bay TMDL requirements, paired with Virginia legislation and existing programs, require the Commonwealth to accomplish goals under this outcome separately from the goals of the partnership.
- EPA recommends consolidating this outcome with the Toxic Contaminants Research Outcome.

Toxic Contaminants Research

Current Outcome Language

- Continually increase our understanding of the impacts and mitigation options for toxic contaminants. Develop a research agenda and further characterize the occurrence, concentrations, sources and effects of mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and other contaminants of emerging and widespread concern. In addition, identify which best management practices might provide multiple benefits of reducing nutrient and sediment pollution as well as toxic contaminants in waterways.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Toxic Contaminants Research](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Toxic Contaminants Workgroup recommends updating the Toxic Contaminants Research Outcome.
- Recommend updating to ensure the partnership maintains a science agenda to support the understanding of emerging risks and best practices for risk mitigation related to known and issues of emerging concern.
- [Toxic Contaminants Research Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion

- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, Maryland, New York, Virginia and West Virginia support updating this outcome.
 - The Chesapeake Bay Commission would like to see the flexibility to work on PCBs, PFAS, microplastics and other emerging contaminants identified as priorities by the partnership.



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- Delaware is open to consolidating the outcome with the Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome or supporting the recommendation to update with expanded goals.
- Maryland is open to consolidating the outcome if the convening aspect can be retained as a way to reduce management uncertainties and more directly inform policy.
- New York notes that the Toxics Contaminants Workgroup should focus as a venue for sharing research and challenges rather than developing future research as an outcome.
- Virginia notes that there is a need for new research on toxic contaminants and this is where the partnership can best help—through the sharing of developments, ideas and best practices.
- West Virginia believes the outcome would need to be more specific if combined with another outcome or made an output.
- The District of Columbia and Pennsylvania recommend reclassifying this outcome underneath the Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention Outcome.
- EPA recommends reclassifying this outcome as an output under a broader Toxic Contaminants Outcome.
 - A broader outcome would support efforts to target restoration efforts and execute the necessary actions to delist impaired streams.

Wetlands

Current Outcome Language

- Continually increase the capacity of wetlands to provide water quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed. Create or reestablish 85,000 acres of tidal and nontidal wetlands and enhance function of an additional 150,000 acres of degraded wetlands by 2025. These activities may occur in any land use (including urban), but primarily occur in agricultural or natural landscapes.
- ChesapeakeProgress: [Wetlands](#)

Outcome Lead Recommendation

- The Wetlands Workgroup recommends updating the Wetlands Outcome.
- Recommend separating tidal and nontidal wetlands into two outcomes.
- Include considerations of changing environmental conditions, conservation and anti-degradation for priority wetlands and ecosystem services in the updated outcome.
- Integrate the current Black Duck Outcome as an output and expand to include all waterbirds.
- [Wetlands Outcome Review Two-Pager](#)

Management Board Opinion



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- The Chesapeake Bay Commission, Delaware, the District of Columbia, EPA, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia support updating this outcome.
 - The District of Columbia, EPA and Virginia do not support the creation of two outcomes, but do support updating the outcome.
 - Delaware would like to see the plan for tidal and nontidal to be two different outcomes and consider if they can be one outcome with two outputs.
 - Maryland would entertain further discussion about how to best represent the distinctions between tidal and nontidal wetlands work.
 - Pennsylvania agrees with separating nontidal and tidal wetlands work but feels they should be outputs under a larger outcome.
- West Virginia stood aside as they do not currently participate.