

GIT 6: Key Priorities for Enhancing Structure, Governance, and Processes in the Chesapeake Bay Program

March 27th, 2025 Management Board Meeting

The priorities outlined below were developed by three small teams (Structure, Governance, Processes) and were informed by these [resources](#) and feedback from participating GIT 6 members to meet the PSC directive to “coordinate an informal process and develop a draft scope of work... to simplify and streamline the structure and governance processes for the partnership”. Each of these priorities is the compilation of many key issues (the number in parentheses after each priority title), framed here to give the Management Board a broad view of the work ahead. In addition to these priorities and as identified in the charge, GIT 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. Many of these process improvements can be identified and implemented quickly.

Priority: Clarifying membership roles, responsibilities, and definitions of Chesapeake Bay Program groups to strengthen accountability and adaptability (40)

- 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 agencies.
- 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 (13)

- 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.
- Integrate single (changing tactics), double (changing approach), and triple-loop (changing goals) learning for adaptive management at all levels of the partnership.

Priority: Refining decision-making processes to ensure broad representation, agile science-based decision making, and integrative participatory practices (9)

- 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 (19)

- 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 (28)

- 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.

Feedback Requests of the Management Board:

- Agreement on and/or modification to priorities? Who (i.e. partnership group) is going to lead and do this work?
- Is there a value of having a third party involved in this work? If so, how to fund/support?
- Is there a value at looking at other geographic programs for logic framework and process as examples?