

ITAT Meeting

April 22, 2025



Management Board Outcome & Output Guidance

Breck Sullivan, USGS, ITAT Co-Coordinator

WQSAM

- Consensus on update for WQSAM!
- Overall:
 - Address endpoint (WQS attainment) in language
 - Include tidal and nontidal monitoring/analysis
 - Monitoring is a priority within the partnership
 - Open to considering other parameters besides (N,P,S,DO,Clarity,CHLA) but not as the focus and need existing monitoring and assessment methods
 - Keep WIP and WQSAM as separate outcomes

Confirmed Guidance:

- Agreement – Outcome sentence with SMART bullets (taken from outputs)
- Logic & Action/Work plans – Activities

OUTCOME

High level outcome language. (The change in state we aim to influence or the future state we aspire to reach as a consequence of our actions and their outputs.) This language does not need metrics.

- Bullets of **measurable targets** or objectives. These are shorter-term steps and results: this is the place to be as specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound (SMART) as possible to ensure we are tracking our work, learning from the results, and being publicly accountable.
- These could be more direct measures of our efforts and whether we are following through on plans and commitments.
- Interim steps and tiered targets acknowledge what is realistic in a set period while leaving space for what we ultimately know is needed for the healthy watershed we envision.
- Targets that are not thoroughly flushed out can be listed as “under construction.”

Outcome: Example

Oyster Outcome

Outcome: Continually increase finfish and shellfish habitat and water quality benefits from restored oyster populations

- Restore native oyster habitat and populations in 10 tributaries by 2025
- manage protection of habitat in the 10 tributaries

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Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring

*Breck Sullivan, USGS, ITAT Co-
Coordinator*

Overall Message



Provide our best recommendations on language at this time!

There will be more changes -> MB, PSC, public feedback

Output

- Outputs:** Outputs are the direct products of program activities and may include types, levels and targets of services to be delivered by the program. If you accomplish your planned activities, then you will hopefully deliver the amount of product and/or service that you intended.

Survey: Outputs

Positive Feedback

- Multiple “Looks good.”
- Not missing anything from laboratory perspective
- Includes key areas especially “improved analysis of the Bay and tributary water quality conditions and the impact of management actions”
- Appreciate incorporation of nontraditional data

Revisions to Consider

- Be more specific with outputs that start with, “Improve”
- Consider organizing outputs by themes like how the activities are categorized
- Target specific locations especially for living resources, not every segment can be a focal point
- Clearer language
- Incorporate other parameters such as temperature, salt, plastics, PFAS
- The outputs go beyond the outcome – are they doing too much?
- Need to include more aspects on modeling (Phase 7) and the integration of AL/ML

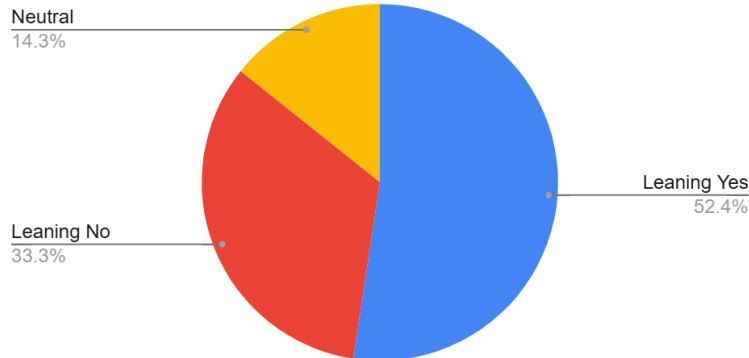
Outcome

- Outcome:** Outcomes are changes in attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, skills, status, or level of functioning expected. The change in state we aim to influence or the future state we aspire to reach as a consequence of our actions and their inputs.

Draft Outcome Language

“Reach full attainment of established water quality standards (DO, Clarity, CHLA) in the Bay and enhanced understanding of nutrients (N&P) and sediment to support meeting target loads, creating positive changes in Bay and watershed health.”

What is your stance on the draft outcome language as it's written above?



Survey: Outcome

“Reach full attainment of established water quality standards (DO, Clarity, CHLA) in the Bay and enhanced understanding of nutrients (N&P) and sediment to support meeting target loads, creating positive changes in Bay and watershed health.”

What did you like?

- “established WQS”
- Covers several key points 1) WQS attainment, 2) nutrient and sediment reduction, 3) Bay and watershed health
- Emphasis on “attainment” to provide accountability for assessing all the standards
- Inclusive of watershed health and bay health
- More direct than current outcome language

Survey: Outcome

“Reach full attainment of established water quality standards (DO, Clarity, CHLA) in the Bay and enhanced understanding of nutrients (N&P) and sediment to support meeting target loads, creating positive changes in Bay and watershed health.”

What did you not like?

- Sets too high an expectation - reaching full attainment may not be possible (“Advance progress toward full attainment?”, place based – where can target to reach full attainment?)
- Stating “Chesapeake Bay Watershed” rather than separate out bay and watershed
- Enhanced understanding is too vague (“Strengthen scientific understanding?”)
- Is it redundant to future WIP Outcome? Combined?
- One output provided some expansion to other parameters – include “other parameters/indicators in outcome language”
- Like current outcome more
- The Goal language speaks to what our outcome should be

Overview

- Group 1: Monitoring Capacity
- Group 2: Similar to new WIP Outcome (Consolidate? Focus more on physical monitoring/capacity?)
- Group 3: Focus on tidal and nontidal (attainment for accountability, but nontidal too vague?)
- Group 4: Our Goal language speaks more to what an outcome could be
- Group 5: Need to be more broad, open the door for other indicators

Goal Language: Reduce pollutants to achieve the water quality necessary to support the aquatic living resources of the Bay and its tributaries and protect human health

WIP Outcome Language: Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Outcome*

▪The CBP partnership will have practices and controls installed to achieve the Bay's dissolved oxygen, water clarity/submerged aquatic vegetation, and chlorophyll-a water quality standards. By no later than the end of 2030, the CBP partnership will update this outcome with a longer-term restoration date. The updated outcome will be informed by science-based information that includes using updated CBP partnership tools such as the Phase 7 model, planning targets, and available strategies developed by the jurisdictions and Conowingo to achieve the water quality targets for nutrients and sediment and also address any potential growth in loads and changing environmental conditions. Through 2030, the partnership will continue to accelerate progress toward achieving water quality standards by installing practices and controls that implement the Phase III WIPs and the two-year milestone commitments. The partnership will demonstrate net reductions in nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment through annual progress reporting and monitoring data.

Moving Forward

- Keeping the WQSAM and WIP Outcome separate
- Potentially sharing one output/target with WIP outcome – “in collaboration with WQSAM/WIP”
- Inclusion of nontidal and tidal
- Incorporating attainment of WQS but making sure it is realistic/achievable