

## **Key Elements of Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Management Strategies**

A management strategy is a single document that summarizes the Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP) Decision Framework process and the collective thinking of the CBP Partnership for each outcome or related group of outcomes. Each management strategy is expected to include each of the following key elements:

### **Content**

1. **Executive Summary.** A short, concise public-friendly summary that describes the content of the Management Strategy and highlights key strategies and benefits.
2. **Outcomes and Baselines.** State the goal and outcome (or outcomes) from the Watershed Agreement that the management strategy is addressing. Add any necessary explanatory information that would make the statement sufficiently explicit, or well enough defined, that anyone reading it would have no doubt about what the aspiration is. Identify the baseline associated with the outcome, how that baseline was derived and the current condition. (This should build upon the outcome justification documents that were issued with the Final Agreement).
3. **Jurisdictions and agencies participating in the strategy.** Identify participating signatories and other stakeholders, including local governments and nonprofit organizations which will be participating in implementation of the strategy. Include a brief description of their role and level of participation. EPA will identify the lead federal agency for each outcome.
  - a. **Local engagement.** Include a statement about whether there is a general or specific role for local governments, watershed associations, nonprofits, the private sector or others in achieving the outcome. When relevant, include a brief description of the role and level of participation of each entity.
4. **Factors influencing ability to meet goal.** Identify the key natural and human systems that could affect the ability to attain the desired outcome. Once identified, all factors should be ranked for both their importance in affecting goal attainment and their ability to be managed. Consider adaptation to changing environmental and economic conditions, impact of land use changes, regulatory obstacles, lack of local champion or community support, etc. Identify management actions that other goal teams or partners could take to mitigate or otherwise influence those factors (e.g. state or federal policy decisions that could counter or hinder progress toward the outcomes).

**Current efforts and gaps.** Identify efforts that are already being taken by jurisdictions, agencies and organizations to determine if the ongoing management effort is sufficient to achieve the goal, or whether enhancement is necessary.

Then, identify the gaps that the partnership should fill to meet the outcome. Identify possible interactions with other management strategies/outcomes and any possible efficiencies that might be achievable to avoid duplication, close gaps, and maximize forward efforts. Financial information, including needs and available resources should be identified and included where appropriate. (Detailed financial information is not required, but where relevant anecdotal or high level financial information would be helpful to tell the story.)

- a. **Actions, tools or technical support needed to empower local government and others.** Identify specific actions, tools or technical support needed at the local level.
5. **Management Approach.** Outline the general approach needed to fill existing gaps and identify the partnership's role in that approach. These are the actions that the program will undertake to address the factors affecting goal and outcome attainment. The approach should include how the stakeholders will be kept informed and involved.
  - a. **Local Engagement.** If relevant, describe what steps will be taken to facilitate greater local participation, including underserved and underrepresented communities as a way to include more diverse participation, in achieving the outcome, including what actions, tools or technical support will be provided to empower local governments and others to do their part.
6. **Monitoring Progress.** Describe how progress toward the outcome will be monitored and any resources needed to develop and/or implement the monitoring program. Include actions taken as well as the results of those activities. Evaluate for basic accountability:
  - a. Verify we are doing what the Agreement specified.
  - b. Verify the outcome is what was expected and desired.
7. **Assessing Progress.** Describe the approach for how, and how often, the progress will be assessed. Include actions taken as well as the results of the monitoring. Biennial updates should include a discussion on whether adequate progress is being made and the strategy or actions that will be taken if progress is not sufficient. Evaluation factors to consider:
  - a) Completion of planned actions as scheduled; and
  - b) Outcome(s) progress sufficiency and timeliness.
8. **Adaptively Manage.** Describe how the assessment of progress will lead to changes in actions, when the outcome itself needs to be changed and under what conditions. Biennial reevaluations should assess progress toward completing actions in the workplans and identify if changes will be needed for the next biennial cycle. Environmental conditions should be assessed based on the appropriate assessment period established in element #7 (Assessing Progress). Stakeholder input will be incorporated into the development and reevaluation of each of the strategies.

9. **Biennial Workplan.** Include a biennial workplan as part of the management strategy. The workplan will succinctly summarize the commitments, actions and resources that each jurisdiction, federal agency and partner will take to help achieve each of the outcomes they are supporting as well as biennial targets and outputs that are related to meeting the outcomes. Update annually, if needed, based on changes in resource availability and any significant programmatic adjustments. The workplan should align with jurisdictions' two-year milestones schedule (note: the first workplans will be for a 2.5 year period). The content of management strategy workplans should also align with the content of jurisdictions' two-year milestones as much as possible.