

Draft, for discussion purposes

*Draft Toxics Outcome Language to help TCWG Prepare Updated Outcome Language
Recommendation to the CBP Management Board for its May 7-8, 2025 Retreat*

April 9, 2025

Current Goal: Ensure that the Bay and its rivers are free of effects of toxic contaminants on living resources and human health.

Current Toxic Contaminants Research outcome:

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, 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.

Current Toxic Contaminants Policy & Prevention outcome:

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.

Context for Updated Outcome Draft Language:

The Management Board came to consensus on 3/27/2025 in support of one consolidated Toxic Contaminants outcome. The workgroup has been tasked with recommending updated outcome language to the Management Board by April 25 in advance of their May 7&8 retreat. The Management Board has not provided further official guidance at this time on whether the outcome should be directional or Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound (SMART). Section 117 of the Clean Water Act requires the existence of a “Chesapeake Bay Basinwide Toxins Reduction and Prevention Strategy” within the Chesapeake Bay Program.

DRAFT Toxic Contaminant Reduction and Emerging Science Outcome

Continually work together to increase our understanding of the impacts and mitigation options for toxic contaminants and reduce the presence of toxic contaminants in the lands, lakes, rivers, streams, and tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. To support those efforts, partners will maintain and pursue a common agenda that shares lessons and emerging science, policy, and management on contaminants of concern within the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

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DRAFT OUTPUTS or Activities; IDEAS that could be made SMART

- Annually report number of engagement opportunities to understand impacts and mitigation of toxic contaminants.
- Track number of fish advisories (tidal and nontidal) each year (do we report trends here? Should we?)
- Every two-year the CBP partnership identifies common priorities that inform a 2 year workplan (a given, but want to highlight the partnership establishing a shared agenda every two years for where to focus activities)
- Develop and implement a strategy framework to address microplastics
- Share communication strategies for Fish Consumption Advisories
- Meet regularly to convene scientists and management practitioners in order to share lessons learned, emerging science, policy advances and best management practices
- Seek feedback from federal and state partners for where their priority actions related to toxic contaminants to build that into activities and outputs
- Develop an indicator that measure the scope that the workgroup is collaborating on
- Others