Status and Trends Workgroup Agenda and Meeting Minutes

Initial Meeting: April 7, 2016 at 1:00-2:30 PM
Joe Macknis Memorial Conference Room (Fish Shack)
Conference Line: 866-299-3188, access code 2679856222

Welcome and Introductions (Laura Free, 5 minutes)

SEE Overview Document.

Overview of Workgroup Mission, Purpose, and Scope (Laura Free, 20 minutes)

Purpose: The mission of the group is to enforce the Indicator Framework. The group will staff the Indicator management process. It will work with the goal teams to identify information needed to adaptively manage the group's goals, outcomes, and communication. This group will need strong participation from the goal teams to ensure that we have up-to-date indicators for Partnership products and foster cross-outcome collaboration. We have historically used indicators for communications- to determine relation of target to goal, the trend over time. The Indicators Framework prioritizes an additional role for indicators: to support adaptive management, using indicators to inform our work and exchange information with each other.

The workgroup will recognize links to existing indicators and support efforts currently underway to develop new indicators. This will be a good forum for cross-goal team collaboration. We also need to manage the process of sun-setting indicators that don't directly connect to agreement outcomes.

Scope: The scope of the workgroup is outlined in the Overview document mentioned above. There are three main buckets of Indicators work that the Status and Trends Workgroup will explore:

- Using the Indicators Framework: Identifying indicator gaps, linking them to Agreement outcomes, recognizing connections between existing indicators.
- Developing New Indicators: Offer guidance, support, new ideas for new indicators.
- Managing the process of "sunsetting," or communicating differently, the indicators that do not directly connect to an Agreement outcome.

Review of Indicator Framework (Doreen Vetter, 15 minutes)

SEE PRESENTATION.

Three goals of the Indicators Framework: Align indicators to the Agreement, support adaptively managing achievement of goals and outcomes, and communicate progress toward commitments.

The Indicators Framework aligns indicators at the Outcome level.

This group will help develop new or refine our existing indicators so that they answer one or more of the following questions: What key influencing factors are impacting achievement of outcomes? Are we doing what we said we would do in our plans and strategies?

The information we need for adaptively managing our outcomes is the same information we want to communicate to others and be held accountable to. The Bay Program communicates outcomes via

Chesapeake Progress, News and feature stories, social media, general education content, and annual progress summary (Bay Barometer).

Questions that members of the Status and Trends workgroup will need to keep in mind moving forward: How many indicators should we have? Will we have an indicator for each outcome? This group needs to help figure out what different types of information we need to use, make connections among our goals/outcomes, and determine whether we have the information that we need to move forward with our work. The workgroup will work with other monitoring groups within the program to determine where we can get this additional information. Mindy Ehrich and Peter Tango have met with the Goal Team leads to begin a Gap Analysis of GIT High Priority Science needs to find out what how the Goal Teams are planning on measuring achievement of their outcomes and information that might be missing. The intent of this group seeks to build on that work, and determine how it fits into the framework. Mindy added that this gap analysis focused on performance indicators.

Indicator Process (Catherine Krikstan, 15 minutes)
SEE PRESENTATION.

- How Management Board provides input on developing new and updating existing indicators

This may help answer the question: What pieces of the process are already decided? How will they play out? How do we get input from management groups, etc.?

Three processes discussed: Updating existing indicators, adapting existing indicators, and establishing new indicators.

Updating Existing Indicators

- How/when to update other parties (Mgmt. Board): It was discussed that the Indicators Coordinator will provide the Management Board with a monthly program update, with an option for the Board to request a presentation or updates from the GIT directly. The Management Board could request any follow up from the Indicators Coordinator or GITs as needed.
- Review Process: It was discussed how data will be verified before it goes "live" on the website, to the public. There is currently a review process before anything goes out. Catherine can add that into the process of Updating Indicators more explicitly. Howard Weinberg asked about how mapping fit into this process. Catherine suggested it would fit in when the web content was drafted, but before actually being updated. Mindy Ehrich added that previous years' data should be reviewed in addition to the new data. Jennifer Greiner mentioned that sometimes it's hard to review or get a sense of the indicator before it's mapped. Spreadsheet form is harder to conceptualize. For this reason, she asked if a map version of the data is available before the QA/QC all-hands review. Howard added that this does not normally happen for existing indicators when adding new data for a new reporting period to the current indicator. Jennifer Greiner asked about the pathway of the data on its way to release. When and to whom does the data come to? We need to talk more about the process for receiving this information. Each of our indicators have a point of contact, but this group might need to revisit that to improve the flow of information. A flow chart or "chain of custody" might be helpful to show this information and may be modified or copied to show processes specific to certain indicators.

- Amy Handen asked to possibly revisit the time line and schedule of receiving and releasing the data in a future meeting. This could help clarify a past discussion on the timing and relationship of receiving vs. publishing data.

Adapting Existing Indicators

- Following Status and Trends WG approval, representatives of the group would need to present the adapted indicator to STAR, Communications WG, and Management Board. It was then discussed who would make those presentations: Carin Bisland mentioned it might depend on the indicator, but would like to really plan this out further. Ideally there would be a "basic case" process that most indicators could follow, with exceptions of particular indicators. A content expert might be appropriate to present. Bruce Vogt added that it would be good to have representatives from all of those parties (STAR, Communications, Management Board) present/involved in Status and Trends Workgroup meetings and actively involved in the adaption or development process. Their involvement could lead them to be a champion for the adapted or new indicator in those larger presentations to STAR, Communications WG, and Management Board.
- Looking forward, the Status and Trends WG does not want to support creation of new indicators without an idea about how data could be collected. The nature of the work requires close collaboration with other STAR groups, including the monitoring workgroup.
- The Status and Trends WG will make time in a future meeting to discuss this adaptation process.

Establishing new indicators

The Indicator Framework Action Team presented the process for establishing new indicators to the Management Board (see presentation in link at the beginning of this section). Discussion on this topic included ideas such as:

- GIT Coordinator identifies/presents a need. The Indicators coordinator can help identify metrics to monitor/develop this indicator. Questions for the Status and Trends WG: Who could help build any new indicators? What is the process of notification?
- One major piece is to talk to the Integrating Monitoring Networks Workgroup, as noted above, to make sure we can cover the data needs for the new indicator.
- Scott Phillips added that it might be helpful to have a regular 10 min monthly update for STAR for input benefit. He specified that "approval" from STAR is not necessary.
- It was discussed that we really need to reach out to the full partnership to develop/change/adapt indicators.

Discussion: Progress towards Outcomes--What's Measurable? (Laura Free, 10 minutes)
This discussion will continue in future meetings of the work group.

- This discussion will touch on the difference between measurable and non-measurable or "work output" outcomes in the Agreement.
- This interpretation of "measurable" is based on whether we can measure progress towards the Outcome in the Agreement.
- The workgroup will discuss at a future meeting whether this division is necessary and, if so, how that distinction affects our pursuit of indicators for those outcomes.

SEE Non-Measurable Outcomes Draft Document.

There is value in discussing/ agreeing as a workgroup as to whether/how we treat indicators differently. If we continue the thinking that every outcome will have an indicator, it will be a challenge, because building indicators where we can't measure progress will be difficult.

Zoe Johnson confirmed that there are metrics/outputs that aren't exactly at the level of indicators. For climate change, there are several indicators listed, some that have no numerical target. Yet there are also more quantifiable indicators (given by EPA) that will affect our ability to achieve our goal. How does achieving our WG goals relate to this workgroup? Laura Free responded that it's a question of how the Status and Trends WG communicates that progress in achieving those outcomes. This workgroup will help answer the question, "Does information that is quantifiable, but does not correspond to a specific numeric target in an outcome, take the form of an indicator or more of a narrative?" In the future, the Status and Trends WG will hone in on how to move forward, and better approach the need to talk about quantifiable and non-quantifiable outcomes differently.

Kristen added that there are outcomes in the agreement that, because they did not have the large history or body of work behind them, didn't receive enough time to develop measurable outcomes for them. In some instances, there is a willingness to create something that is quantifiable, but GITS still need the expertise or time to help achieve that. This group might be a great resource for that type of development.

These documents discussing measureable indicators and non-measureable indicators are drafts and very changeable. Laura Free welcomes any input on these drafts.

Looking at the non-measureable indicator document, a future meeting will discuss this table and the quantifiable/non-quantifiable indicators. For those outcomes that have "no current indicator," it is the task of the group to decide if this is okay, or if there should be indicators.

These documents break down the outcomes in the agreement to really parse the components of outcomes: This however does not mean that indicators need to be created for each piece of those outcomes. This will help the group to recognize that these components are in the agreement and will help inform decisions about how we communicate our progress and whether they are helpful in adaptively managing our work.

Review of this table might best be done by the GITs outside of workgroup meetings.

It was discussed that categorizing current indicators in this way, measureable and non-measureable, seems appropriate to move the Status and Trends work group forward and to help the planning process. Shanita Brown added that adding a research phase as a status category in the documents might also be helpful, especially for outcomes that aren't easily measureable. Looking at other places that have possibly done this work before might provide insight in how we go about considering and developing indicators for these outcomes.

Peter Tango asked if there are interim measures/insights/indicators we can use to describe progress, while we try to attain our ideal data collection. It was discussed that Key Actions, as listed in GIT work plans, could potentially fit as an interim to an indicator. The precedent is there from past Chesapeake Bay Program work.

Forecast for Next Meeting (Laura Free, 10 minutes): Agenda topics for next meeting possibly include:

- Fuller discussion of distinguishing between measurable and non-measurable outcomes
- Brainstorming activity: What are our workgroup priorities for 2016? For the next 6 months? For the next 3 months?

Please fill out the survey to determine future meeting schedule. This is an open workgroup. Let Laura/Melissa know who else to include in membership.

Continued discussion of measureable/non-measurable Indicators. Possible Prioritization Activity to determine a timeline for the Status and Trends WG actions.

It might be helpful to have a smaller sub-group to help flesh out upcoming topics for the future meetings. Potentially organize meetings by 3 categories: updating existing indicators (refers to data update), developing new indicators, and adapting existing indicators (refers to changing how indicator is organized, formulated, or presented—beyond a reporting period data update.

Future attendance will likely be topic-driven.

Timeline: When do we expect certain indicators to be updated? Are there indicators that we know are going to be modified? These questions might be answered by current work plans. This can also be useful for the Management Board, to see a timeline of what's expected when.

Adjourn

Action Items:

- Staffer to send out placeholder invitation for next meeting
- Coordinator to begin drafting workgroup schedule/strategy
- Coordinator to share timeline or calendar of indicator updates/adaptation/development
- GITs and outcome representatives to review respective outcomes in the provided PDFs and send feedback to Laura Free before next meeting
- Coordinator to convene a planning subgroup to determine agenda topics for next meeting
- Coordinator to update Indicator by Status tables, based on information received from workgroup members, including the following point made at this meeting: Add "Research" as a category.

Requested Items for Future Agendas:

- Timeline and schedule for updating indicators
- What is the review process for updating indicators? Clearly outline and stress adherence to it.
  - How do we involve GIS in this review?
  - Can GIT coordinators view media - such as maps - before they go live, in an update (as is done in an adapted or new indicator process)?
- (Long term) Review flow chart for process for collecting data (One universal? One for each indicator?)

- What outcome statements in the "Non-Measurable" document can we move into the "Measurable" document, based on the information we would acquire rather than the outcome itself?
- How do key actions in the work plans relate to an indicator?
- Fuller discussion of distinguishing between measurable and non-measurable outcomes
- Brainstorming and voting activity: What are our workgroup priorities for 2016? For the next 6 months? For the next 3 months?

ATTENDEES

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