Water Quality Goal Implementation Team
Governance Protocols

The charge of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's Water Quality Goal Implementation Team (WQGIT) is to "evaluate, focus, and accelerate the implementation of practices, policies, and programs that will restore water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries to conditions that support living resources and protect human health."[1] To meet this charge, it is essential to have specific governance protocols in place to help guide our decision-making process; address those issues that have cross-sector implications; and provide a clear path for key informational and decisional check points on priorities and actions that can impact the achievement of our shared water quality goals and commitments.

The purpose of this governance document is three-fold: (1) to identify cross-sector issues that require a decision by the WQGIT; (2) to clearly articulate a consistent and transparent decision-making process; and (3) to ensure that voting procedures are firmly in place if a consensus cannot be reached on any issue requiring a WQGIT decision.

The following governance protocols apply to the WQGIT and the WQGIT Workgroups[2]:

Governance Protocols

- Following every WQGIT call, an email will be distributed that details not only the action items and decisions from that call, but also recent sector-specific Workgroup-level decisions. The intent is to keep the WQGIT membership appraised of sector-specific technical issues that are being discussed at the Workgroup level.
    - WQGIT members are encouraged to have their own coordination process with their Workgroup representatives within their respective jurisdiction/agency/organization in place to stay informed of sector-specific issues.

- Any WQGIT Workgroup decision that has cross-sector implications will come before the WQGIT membership for final approval of that decision rather than as informational briefings. This will help ensure that all partners are aware of the issue at hand and potential impacts to every sector are considered before approval.

- A consensus-based approach will be the primary decision-making mechanism utilized by the WQGIT and the WQGIT Workgroups. If consensus cannot be reached, the following voting procedures are in place:
    - Decisions require a simple two-thirds majority vote, where the number of votes in favor must be at least twice the number of votes against.
    - Abstaining votes, neutral votes, or voting members not present are not considered.
    - Each jurisdiction, federal agency, and other organization recognized as official members[3] are allowed only one vote.

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[1],[3]http://www.chesapeakebay.net/groups/group/water_quality_goal_implementation_team
[2] http://www.chesapeakebay.net/groups/group/water_quality_goal_implementation_team#relgroups