

Outcome Attainability: Update II to the CBP Management Board

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Our objective (copied from Update I, dated March 11, 2021): To review the progress/status of the 31 outcomes of the 2014 Agreement, identifying those that have quantifiable targets, and specifying alternatives for those outcomes that are unlikely to be met without a significant change of course.

Current Perspective

Five months ago, an analysis was conducted that identified 7 outcomes with quantitative, time-bound targets associated with their completion, and were unlikely to be met without implementing significant changes. Other outcomes with quantifiable targets and timetables appeared to be on a good trajectory.

After presenting the issue to the Management Board, exploring aspects of it further at the SRS biennial meeting, and several subsequent discussions among the Outcome Attainability Team (OAT), the thinking on this topic has shifted slightly. To better focus our efforts, outcomes were color coded in the attached table to help guide our next steps.

Outcome Attainability Table

The Outcome Attainability Table bins the 31 outcomes into several categories. These categories are represented by being shaded red, yellow, green, or left unshaded. The significance of the color coding is described below:

The “red” outcomes are far off track. ***They will require additional support from an action team of technical and policy experts to outline geographically specific interim targets to accelerate progress and establish accountability, and develop cost estimates.*** This effort is already underway for the 2025 WIP outcome. Similar attention should be given to the remaining two “red” outcomes.

The “yellow” outcomes represent varying levels of uncertainty and generally fall into the following sub-categories:

- Those missing specific, known resources, like brook trout. The Management Board should advocate for these resources to help get the outcomes back on track.
- Others need more clearly defined metrics or analysis associated with existing metrics. These outcomes may not be met, but these measures are needed first to identify a path forward. This work can be completed by their respective workgroups and GITs over the next 2 years.
- The third sub-category includes outcomes with a renewed emphasis from the PSC, but specific renewed efforts achieve, or in some cases to establish new targets, have not been identified. The climate and diversity outcomes fall into this group. The yellow outcomes may not be completed by 2025. However, ***meaningful steps forward can be taken by relying on the current workgroups, GITs, and Management Board via the SRS process.***

The “green” outcomes still require substantial effort to be completed, but they are likely to be completed by 2025, if current efforts continue as planned.

The “unshaded” outcomes represent those that don’t have quantifiable targets, or timetables, or both. Many of these outcomes are characterized by the phrase, “continuously improve...” some condition or level of knowledge to advance the outcome. ***Professional judgment of the various Goal Implementation Teams and their workgroups is required to characterize if these outcomes are on track or not.***

Recommendations Summary

The Outcome Attainability Team recommends the following:

1. For wetlands and forest buffers, an infusion of state and federal representatives that can reallocate funding and programs to address shortfalls and accelerate progress on these outcomes are critically needed.
2. The SRS process should continue to be employed to identify the specific barriers to achieving the “yellow” outcomes.
3. Outcomes shaded yellow for which known shortfalls exist (brook trout and black duck), should be elevated to the PSC.
4. Efforts should continue on the “green” outcomes so that they stay on track.
5. For unshaded outcomes, each of the GITs and associated workgroups should define how progress toward and ultimate success of their outcome will be described narratively, and/or measured through metric or indicator development with assistance from the Status and Trends Workgroup and STAR.
6. The results of progress toward outcome completion should be compiled in the biennial report to the PSC next year. The report should be drafted by the Communications Workgroup and draw as much as possible from existing sources like ChesapeakeProgress, Bay Barometer, and the SRS Logic & Action Plans.

Table 1: Outcomes with targets and timeframes identified in the Outcome language

Goal	Outcome	Status
Sustainable Fisheries	Blue Crab Abundance & Mgmt	No intervention needed.
	Oyster Restoration	No Intervention needed.
Vital Habitats	Brook Trout	Indicator under refinement. Support needed to develop database framework and data collection and analysis.
	Fish Passage	No Intervention needed.
	Forest Buffers	Significantly off trajectory. Intervention needed – increase rate of implementation.
	Stream Health	A new baseline for the Chessie BIBI was established in 2018 and we are expecting updated data and A&M in the next couple of weeks for the first update.
	SAV	Water clarity and climate change impacts. Unclear trajectory given recent declines.
	Tree Canopy	Tree canopy baseline established in 2013. First update with acreage loss data available in October along with the annual tree planting data. Incomplete information on status.
	Wetlands	Significantly off trajectory. Incomplete tracking information. Data support and intervention is needed to increase rate of implementation.
	Black Duck	Target and baseline developed. Data support needed to identify consistent means to collect tidal wetland acreage. Could be combined with the wetlands outcome above?
Water Quality	2025 WIP	Currently off trajectory for nitrogen. Interventions are in place through WIPs, 2-year milestones, etc.
Land Conservation	Protected Lands	No intervention needed.
Public Access	Public Access	No intervention needed.
Stewardship	Diversity*	Off trajectory with current indicator. Looking at additional metrics. Signed Directive.

*Target and date set by CBP. Not in original Outcome language

Table 2: Outcomes with either no quantitative targets or have targets but no timeframes

Goal	Outcome	Notes
Sustainable Fisheries	Fish Habitat	
	Forage Fish	
Water Quality	Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring	Attainment indicator developed and is updated annually along with monitored trends in pollutant loads.
Toxic Contaminants	Toxic Contaminants Research	Working to develop options for an indicator of progress
	Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention	Indicator of PCB toxic impairments developed and reported biennially.
Healthy Watersheds	Healthy Watersheds	Healthy Watersheds Assessment Tool to be completed in late 2022 – 2023. Coordinator is compiling list of 5-6 interim metrics to present at the S&TWG August meeting.
Land Conservation	Land Use Options Evaluation	Working to develop metrics to track progress
	Land Use Methods and Metrics	
Stewardship	Citizen Stewardship	Baseline developed and reported. Next data update expected in 2022.
	Local Leadership	Awaiting approval from OMB to collect the data that will inform development of an indicator.
Environmental Literacy	Sustainable Schools	Indicator of progress developed and reported. No Target or timeline.
	Environmental Literacy Planning	Indicator of progress developed and reported. No target or timeline
	Student MWEEs	Indicator of progress developed and reported. No timeline to meet target.
Climate Resiliency	Monitoring and assessment	Directive in development. Several indicators currently reported but work underway to reduce the number to focus efforts on those most meaningful to the CBP.
	Adaptation	Directive in development