



## Status and Trends Workgroup Meeting

Monday, June 7, 2021

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

Join by Webinar

Meeting Number: 120 165 5707 Password: **STWG**

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Meeting Materials:

[https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/status\\_and\\_trends\\_workgroup\\_june\\_2021\\_meeting](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/status_and_trends_workgroup_june_2021_meeting)

*This meeting will be recorded for internal use to assure the accuracy of meeting notes.*

### AGENDA

#### **1:00 Opening and Roll Call - Katheryn Barnhart, Coordinator**

#### **1:05 Indicator Update Process Review – Katheryn**

We will go over the indicator update process and open the floor for questions. We will also gather information on how different outcomes divide roles/responsibilities for indicator updates.

Katheryn plans to create a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) which will be a document or a series of documents that provides information on the indicator process to help those that deliver the updates but do not work with this information daily.

*Desired takeaways/Goal: The development of SOPs for Subject Matter Experts and Data Providers might help increase the efficiency of indicator updates. Gathering this information, including where people have questions, is important for developing these SOPs and making sure they are as helpful as possible*

The workgroup participated in menti questions to build a baseline for Katheryn to understand everyone's knowledge on the indicator process. The data from the menti questions will help the focus of the SOP and the language in the document. The results are available [here](#) (The answer to the first question is not PDF. It is word/excel file.).

A note for question #5 the group providing the update tend to have a lot of back and forth for the text between the subject matter experts, the internal communications expert, and the web content specialist. The web content specialist does the final text update to Chesapeake Progress.

## 1:50 Revisit Priorities – Katheryn

Opportunity for members to provide feedback on plan that was sent by email in early March. Where are we? What changes need to be made? Is the current focus indicator development and might there be any other needs specific to those outcomes? Future agenda items?

Katheryn Barnhart started by showing the Indicator Process document which is available [here](#).

Julie Reichert-Nguyen commented that Climate Resiliency Workgroup has not been using consistent terminology as described in the Indicator Process document. In the CRWG documents, the chair viewed the data provider as the source of data. Definitions of roles in the SOP would be helpful. Katheryn Barnhart said it is difficult to describe because it can be different based on workgroup/indicator, but this is a topic she wants to focus on in the future and provide some definitions in the SOP.

Kristin Saunders said from the Biennial Meeting there was a perceived disconnect on how progress of certain outcomes was portrayed. It may not have match what a workgroup chair or coordinator may describe as the progress for the outcome. She was wondering if Katheryn could include a step in the SOP that has the workgroup chair or coordinator review how the progress is being communicated so the workgroup chair or coordinator's thinking matches with what is described on Chesapeake Progress. Katheryn Barnhart said the assessment of status for the Biennial Meeting presentation was based on the narrative analysis, indicator updates, and Analysis & Methods (A&M) files for each outcome. They can only communicate based on what information and documents are given to them. If there is a disconnect and mis-messaging from what the indicator providers feels then they need to include a step of insuring their communication matches what they want to represent with the outcome and what they need. Doreen Vetter said it was a surprise to her that workgroup chairs or coordinators did not agree with the interpretation or how progress was shown because they pulled the information straight from the documents they provided. They started with the indicator and then went to the narrative analysis to see how it was presented. The disconnect could be that they are communicating with the subject matter expert which means it may not go up to the workgroup chair. Peter Tango agrees that if there are those multiple layers, they team might want to make sure they are represented. Doreen Vetter said they need one person that is the point person for the results. They do not want to mediate the different opinions between subject matter experts and the workgroup because their role is more accounting for the integrity of the data, making sure the documents are consistent. and how to communicate it to accurately reflect the results.

Peter Tango asked who gives the final approval. Carin Bisland said no one really gives approval because Katheryn Barnhart and Doreen Vetter have a more back and forth effort to make sure the data and results are consistent and accurate across documents because they are not the subject matter experts. Doreen Vetter said the Indicators Coordinator is the one that says the documents are final for developing communication products.

Carin Bisland stated based on unofficial conversations she has had that some groups have multiple reporting requirements and sometimes the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) reporting is not always their top priority for attention at the management level. Time and attention is not spent to make sure the communication/message is accurate. Maybe part of the SOP needs to include a level of acceptance from the workgroup chair.

Kristin Saunders suggested perhaps two potential solutions would be 1) to make it clear in the roles/responsibilities the coordinator is responsible for making sure their chair is not surprised and/or 2) before the final report out/posting the indicator coordinator or communications folks do a final pass by the chair before it goes live. They can't assume that vertical conversation is happening.

Bruce Vogt stated he agrees it would be helpful to have a checkpoint after A&M is done and public facing Chesapeake Progress updates are drafted to get green light from Chair before publishing. Doreen Vetter said she thinks that would be helpful. Perhaps that step can be something we request happen during final web text review by the SMEs.

Peter Tango commented roles may overlap, e.g. coordinators may also be subject matter experts and have a role in review and editing the documentation. Chairs may also be subject matter experts. Is the Indicator Team looking to declare one subject matter expert in charge or recognize multiple experts that can and should be part of the review to ensure proper representation of the indicator, the message, and the data. Katheryn Barnhart said they recognize that multiple subject matter experts can be involved in the process, and so they would share the responsibilities associated with that role.

Scott Phillips stated the Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring (WQSAM) outcome has multiple indicators under it. There is not one point of contact for all those indicators. Should there be one person? Carin Bisland said for the actual indicator there can be different points of contacts since the indicators require different information. For communication of the indicator, Katheryn and Rachel Felver use the information from the A&M to create the messaging. Katheryn Barnhart said there is a question on the A&M asking for the Chesapeake Bay Program contact, and people can add multiple names. Scott Phillips said it clarifies that it can be multiple people who review a particular indicator.

Scott Phillips also stated for the WQSAM outcome it has a downward arrow with three indicators that have different results. He asked what is the process used to look at the associated indicators and then look at the overall progress of the outcome. Doreen Vetter said there is a need to revisit that process. When Chesapeake Progress came out, it was based on indicator update and the change from the previous year. That was chosen before the Strategy Review System (SRS) started, and now there is richer information provided through the SRS materials. They are considering of bringing this information to STAR to discuss how to represent the outcome status. For example, the wetland outcome may always gain wetland acres each year, but the outcome overall will not be reached by 2025 so should it be represented as an upward arrow. Scott Phillips said for the indicator they could easily describe upward, downward, and no change, but the outcome itself may be based on information in the narrative analysis.

Katheryn Barnhart asked the workgroup for topics they should address in the future. Peter Tango said qualitative information has signs and items for improvements so he thinks they can help establish a quantitative metric to those qualitative outcomes. Scott Phillips stated the Toxic Contaminant Workgroup is ready to work with the Status and Trends Workgroup for the Toxic Contaminant Research Outcome. Katheryn Barnhart asked the workgroup if they should focus on an additional indicator. Scott Phillips suggested climate. Julie Reichert-Nguyen said the Climate Resiliency Workgroup is looking at how to create metrics for the climate adaptation outcome, but they are working with the Management Board to help prioritize which indicators

to focus on and making sure it connects to management decisions. She doesn't know if Katheryn is looking for a short-term effort because creating metrics for the adaptation outcome will take longer to understand and capture. Katheryn thinks it matches their efforts to help quantify outcomes without indicators. The CBP has three types of indicators. They have the output indicator, the performance indicator, and the influencing factors indicators. Julie stated we would welcome support for the climate indicators.

Kristin Saunders thinks Renee Thompson would appreciate some help with how to create a useful indicator for healthy watersheds.

Peter Tango agreed with Kristen. That is an interesting one if the indicator is 100% of healthy waters must remain healthy. Statistically speaking, that is impossible. They will never maintain 100% of healthy waters because things happen in the world beyond their control that will impact habitat measures (storms, living resource communities changing even naturally or due to parasites and disease in natural cycles, etc.) It is bad practice to back the group into a corner with statements about 100% sustaining of anything ecologically speaking. So perhaps they can think about real versus vision of goals.

Kristin Saunders suggested some questions to consider – What does the Partnership or Management Board want to focus on for indicators? Do they want to focus on those that do not have an indicator at all or do they want to focus on indicators that are qualitative and giving them a target, or focus on indicators that need data support? Katheryn Barnhart stated these are some of the same questions she has been grappling with, but it might need to be a Management Board discussion and priority. Carin Bisland said they can work on multiple priorities at once, but she thinks Sean Corson's effort could help with this discussion in their July Management Board agenda item. Carin Bisland agrees the Management Board should be a part of the discussion.

Scott Phillips said the outcomes that have targets and indicators but need data support should be priorities for the PSC request on improving CBP monitoring networks. This includes wetlands, brook trout, black duck, and stream health. The PSC effort is focused on the WQSAM outcome, but it will also focus on other outcomes. Peter Tango said within the recommendations section for the PSC, he is including topics that may not fit within the WQSAM outcome. He hopes this lets the discussion continue after the PSC effort.

Peter Tango said groups need to consider what they mean by indicator and what it represents because an indicator does not need to make 100% accountability of the Bay. Katheryn Barnhart said the workgroup can serve as a platform for discussing monitoring support, and it can help quantifying an indicator for those that do not have metrics and creating language to describe it.

Bruce said he would like to use this group as a sounding board with Fish Habitat, but the direction they are going in is a little different than stating the progress toward an outcome language. They are trying to link environmental change and using observational data to see if it is impacting the quality of the fish. They are doing it this way because they are making sure managers are seeing the connections and the information can be built in regional management. Julie stated climate adaptation is similar to what Bruce described in how they are approaching indicators. Carin Bisland said she thinks that is just as important because they are trying to move more into an adaptive management form. Peter Tango how well do indicators being reported actually represent the intention of the outcome they are being attached to. He thinks of that as an important exercise to use to go forward.

Scott Phillips stated the WQSAM outcome will continue to be a high priority for the program so we should be working to move it into the first column (have targets, indicators, and data support).

## **2:25 Next steps and Actions – Breck Sullivan, Staffer**

- Review the menti results and comments provided in the meeting minutes to help draft SOP.
  - o Suggestions:
    - Roles described
    - Step to have workgroup chair review indicator documents
- Revisit process of looking at the associated indicators and then look at the overall progress of the outcome when determining how to display trends, specifically on Chesapeake Progress
  - o Potentially bring suggestions to STAR.
- Items for future meetings:
  - o Helping outcomes with a qualitative metric form a quantitative metric.
    - Start with Toxic Contaminates, Healthy Watersheds, and Climate
  - o Fish Habitat present on their efforts to develop indicators
  - o Discuss how to help getting the WQSAM outcome to the category of having targets, indicators and data support.
- Discuss with the Management Board what type of indicator/outcome status do they want to prioritize (i.e. indicators that need data support or creating metrics for qualitative indicators)?
- Katheryn will reach out to the outcome leads that were not able to attend the meeting to see if they have additional topics they would like to bring forward to the workgroup.

## **Adjourn**

**Participants:** Breck Sullivan, Katheryn Barnhart, Tom Butler, Crystal Zhao, Julie Reichert-Nguyen, Justin Shapiro, Megan Ossmann, Michelle Guck, Garrett Stewart, Peter Tango, Rachel Felver, Scott Phillips, Kristin Saunders, Kaitlyn May, Bruce Vogt, Tuana Phillips, Angie Wei, Anissa Foster, Carin Bisland, Doreen Vetter, Marisa Baldine, Sally Claggett