



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

**New and
Improved!**

CBP Governance and Management Framework and Structure

July 17, 2026
Greg Barranco, CBP

2025 Watershed Agreement

Three years of self-reflection, analysis and planning resulting in:

- A new Watershed Agreement (Dec. 2, 2025)
- Revised Governance and Management Framework
- Modified Organizational Structure
- Revised decision-making protocols

By July 1, 2026, the Principals' Staff Committee will finalize the membership, leadership, responsibilities and decision-making protocols associated with these two structural components. However, to align with the revised *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* and ensure timely delivery of Management Strategies, the partnership will begin preparing for—and transitioning to—the new Goal Team structure following the December 2, 2025 Executive Council meeting.

Beyond 2025 Deliverables, Decisions, Process Map

Where are we?

Reaching 20205 Report
Outcome Attainment Assessment and recommendations

SC: Visioning Exercises
Focus groups: **big picture:** What does the future Watershed look like?
Any significant differences from current Vision? *Do we need the same monitoring, analysis, and synthesis to show progress on this vision?*

SC: Value Assessment of Agreement

- Do current goals/outcomes still match the vision?
- Are current goals/outcomes right ones, do we need to drop/add some?
- Does CBP impact each goal/outcome? Can we be more impactful? How?
- *Are we equipped to assess these goals/outcomes? Do we have an effective approach for addressing science needs across*

Changes Needed to Agreement?

- What do we do with outcomes achieved in 2025? Stop all work? Set new targets/same pace?
- What to do about 2025 attainment dates? Extend to 2035, 2040?
- Any changes need to processes?
- *Are we investing in the right science? How do we prioritize where resources go to address science questions?*

SC sm. groups: High Profile Issues
“Visioning Discussions”
(specific topics: shallow waters, climate, NPS load reductions vs BMP#s, sandboxing, living resource focused WIPs)
Changes needed to monitoring, model, policies, procedures, etc?

Consider Assessment Recommendations:
Joint Committees: GITs/Workgroups
Emerging Science, Policy: Reaching 2025, CESR, Rising Temps, Dartmouth, Biennial Mtg Report, etc.)
Changes needed to monitoring, model, policies, procedures, etc?

Draft Recommendation on Agreement (amend/extend, modify/wholesale new) Science

Potential change

Changes Needed to Address Science?

- Are there things we can improve in the process of engaging the science providers to address science needs?
- Review process of incorporating enhanced protocols and technology – Are there things we can improve to support and carry these advancements forward?
- How can we apply the necessary social science tools to effectively involve and serve communities in ways that are equitable, fair, and just for all

ERG Organizational/Gov Assessment

- PSC, MB structures - working vs not working
- CBP Processes – working?
- Adaptive Management enhancement
- Stakeholder/NGO input

Draft Recommendation
S: Organizational, Adaptive Mgmt., Process, Modifications

Phase II: Implement recommendations Post 2024 EC Mtg.

Final Recommendations to EC

SC
↓
MB
↓
PSC



THRIVING HABITAT, FISHERIES & WILDLIFE

Blue Crabs - Brook Trout -
Fish Habitat - Fish Passage
- Oysters - Stream Health
- Submerged Aquatic
Vegetation (SAV) - Wetlands



HEALTHY LANDSCAPES

Adapting to Changing
Environmental Conditions -
Healthy Forests and Trees -
Land Use Planning and Decision
Support - Protected Lands



CLEAN WATER

Reducing Excess Nitrogen,
Phosphorus and Sediment
- Toxic and Emerging
Contaminants - Water Quality,
Standards Attainment and
Monitoring



ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

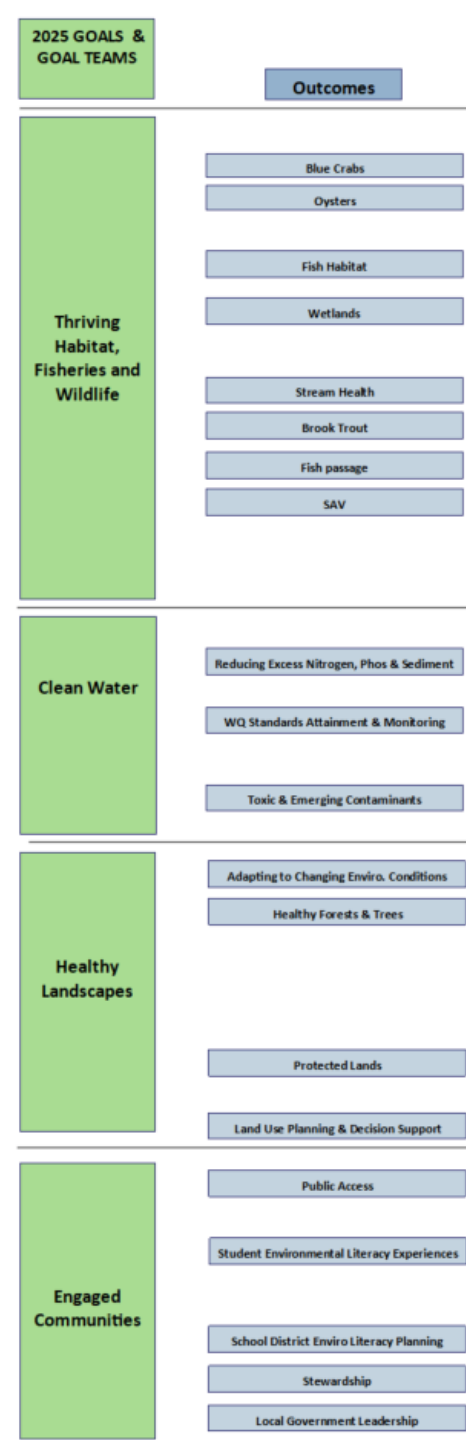
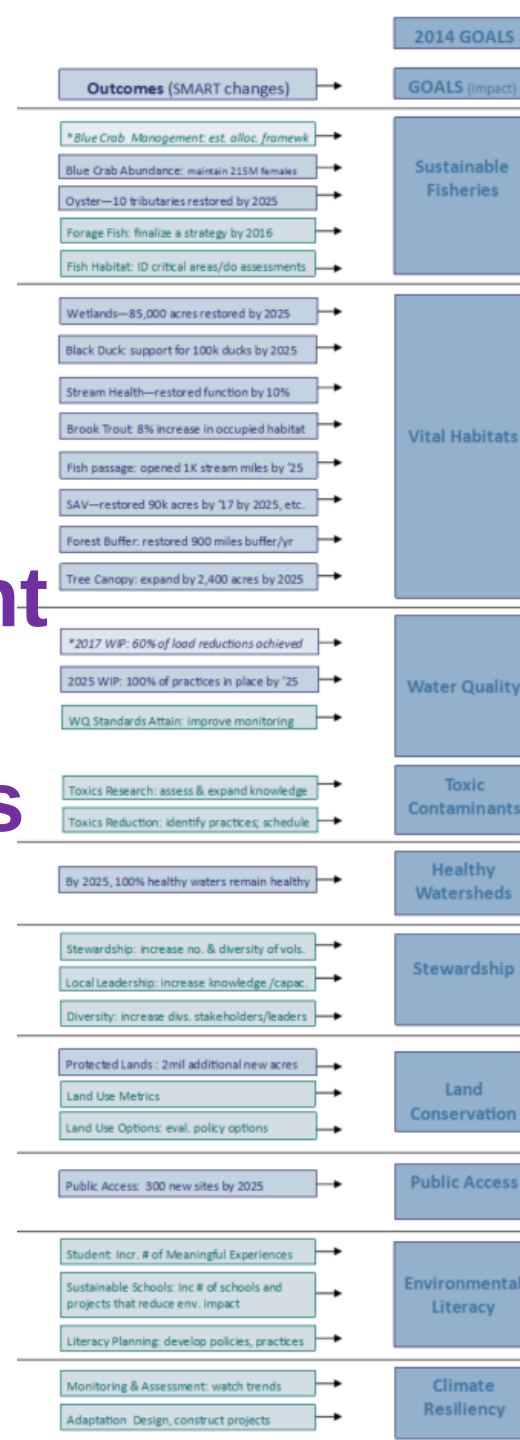
Local Government Leadership
- Public Access - School
District Environmental Literacy
Planning - Stewardship -
Student Environmental Literacy
Experiences - Workforce

2025 Agreement

- 4 Goals
- 20 Outcomes
- 45 Targets

2014 Agreement

- 10 Goals
- 31 Outcomes



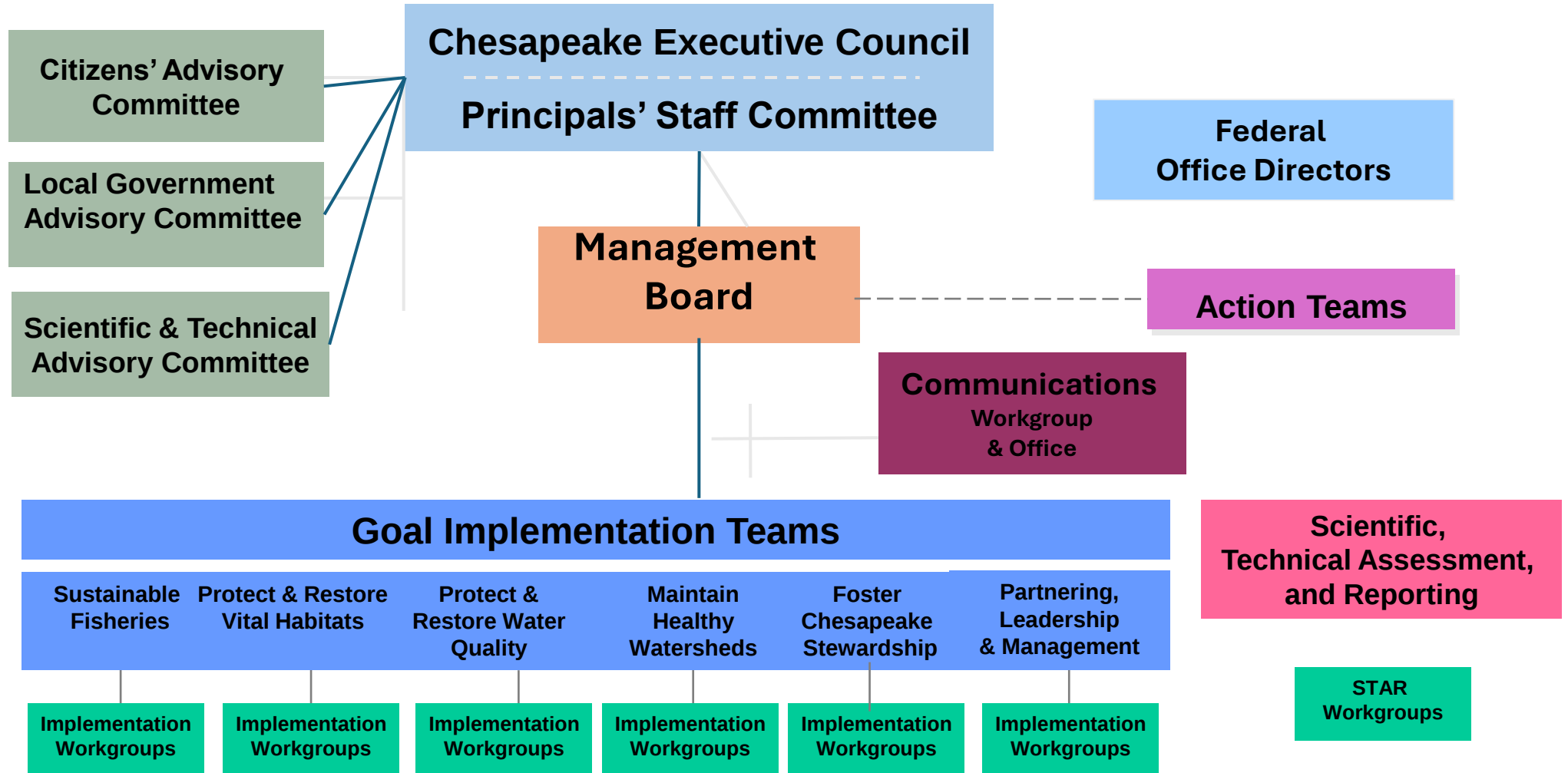
2025 Agreement

- 4 Goals
- 21 Outcomes
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Governance and Management Framework

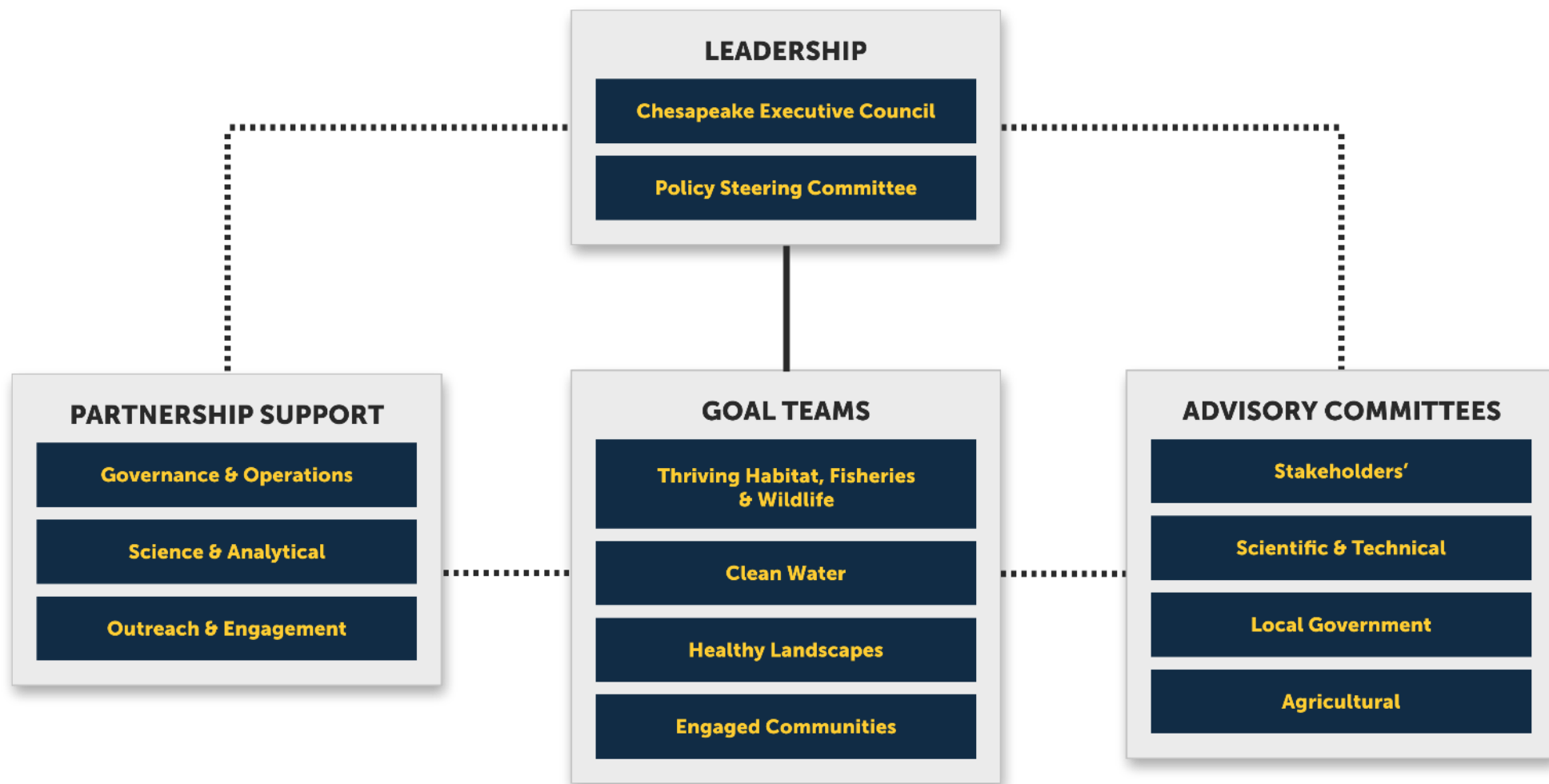
1. At their June 11th meeting, **the Management Board (MB) achieved consent to accept the revised Governance and Management Framework (GMF)** and forward for PSC approval. **Approved by the PSC on July 1.**
2. The revised GMF and supplemental materials represents **six months of robust partnership collaboration, teamwork, and coordination.** Five interim drafts are evidence of the Implementation Team's consistent progress and pursuit of feedback.
3. The GMF will be **reviewed annually** to **ensure policies and procedures continuously meet our intention for an effective, efficient, and inclusive approach** to achieving the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement*.

CBP **PARTNERSHIP** Structure and Leadership 12-2020



Chesapeake Bay Program Organizational Structure

“A simplified and streamlined structure and process for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments in an effective, efficient, and inclusive manner.” - Charting a Course Beyond 2025 (12.04.24)



Chesapeake Bay Program Organizational Structure

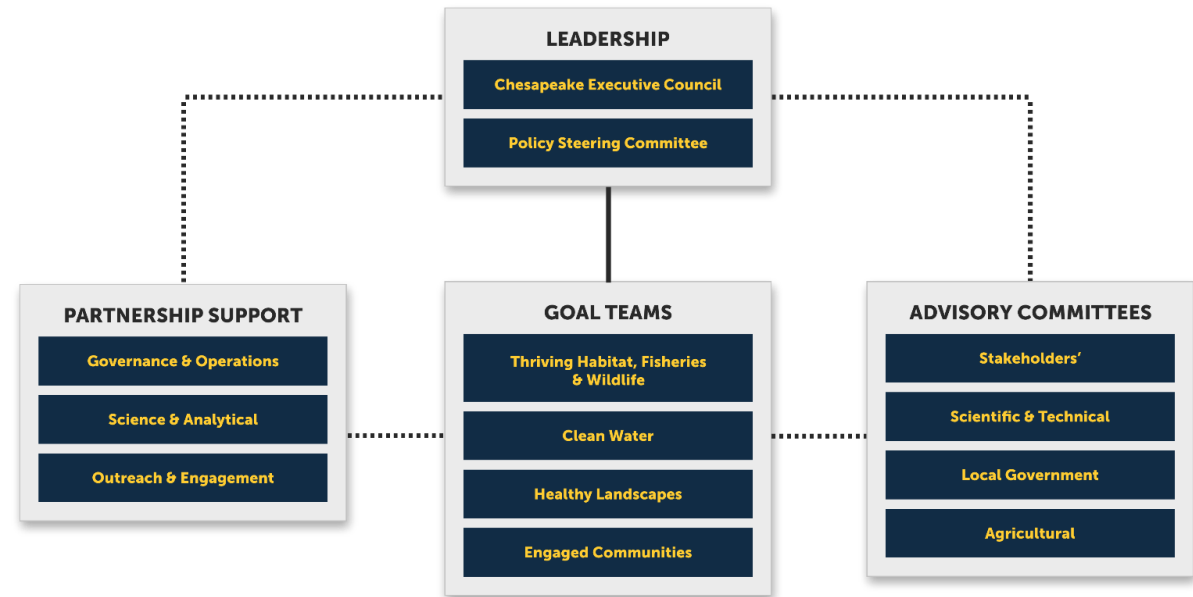
*“A **simplified** and **streamlined STRUCTURE** and process for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments in an **effective, efficient,** and **inclusive manner.**” - Charting a Course B25 (12.04.24)*

Eliminated the Management Board

- Decrease decision-making redundancy and processing time.
- Enhance Goal Team authority
- Clarify roles and responsibilities across the CBP.

Substructure aligned with the revised *Agreement*

- Assessed existing Workgroups and Action Teams
- Reduced from six to four Goal Teams.
- Net reduction of four Workgroups.



Chesapeake Bay Program Organizational Structure

*“A **simplified** and **streamlined** structure and **PROCESS** for the partnership that supports all partners as they work toward achieving their commitments in an **effective, efficient, and inclusive manner.**” - Charting a Course B25 (12.04.24)*

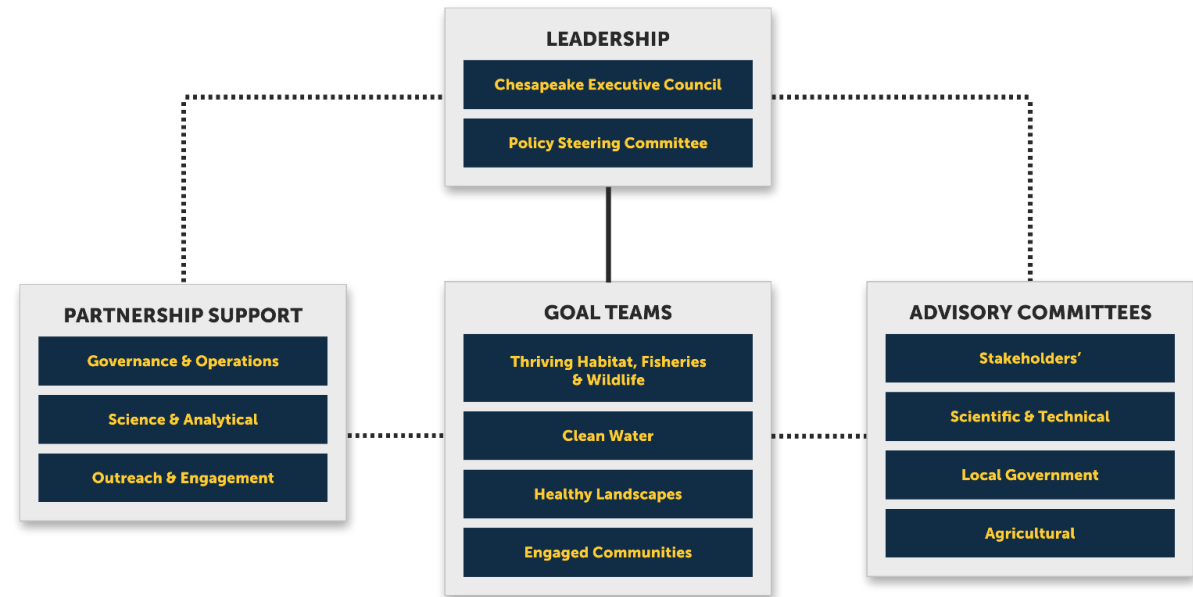
Explicit Decision-Making Frameworks

- Standardized where appropriate but also tailored to a body's membership and purpose.
- Established criteria for when it is necessary to elevate a decision.

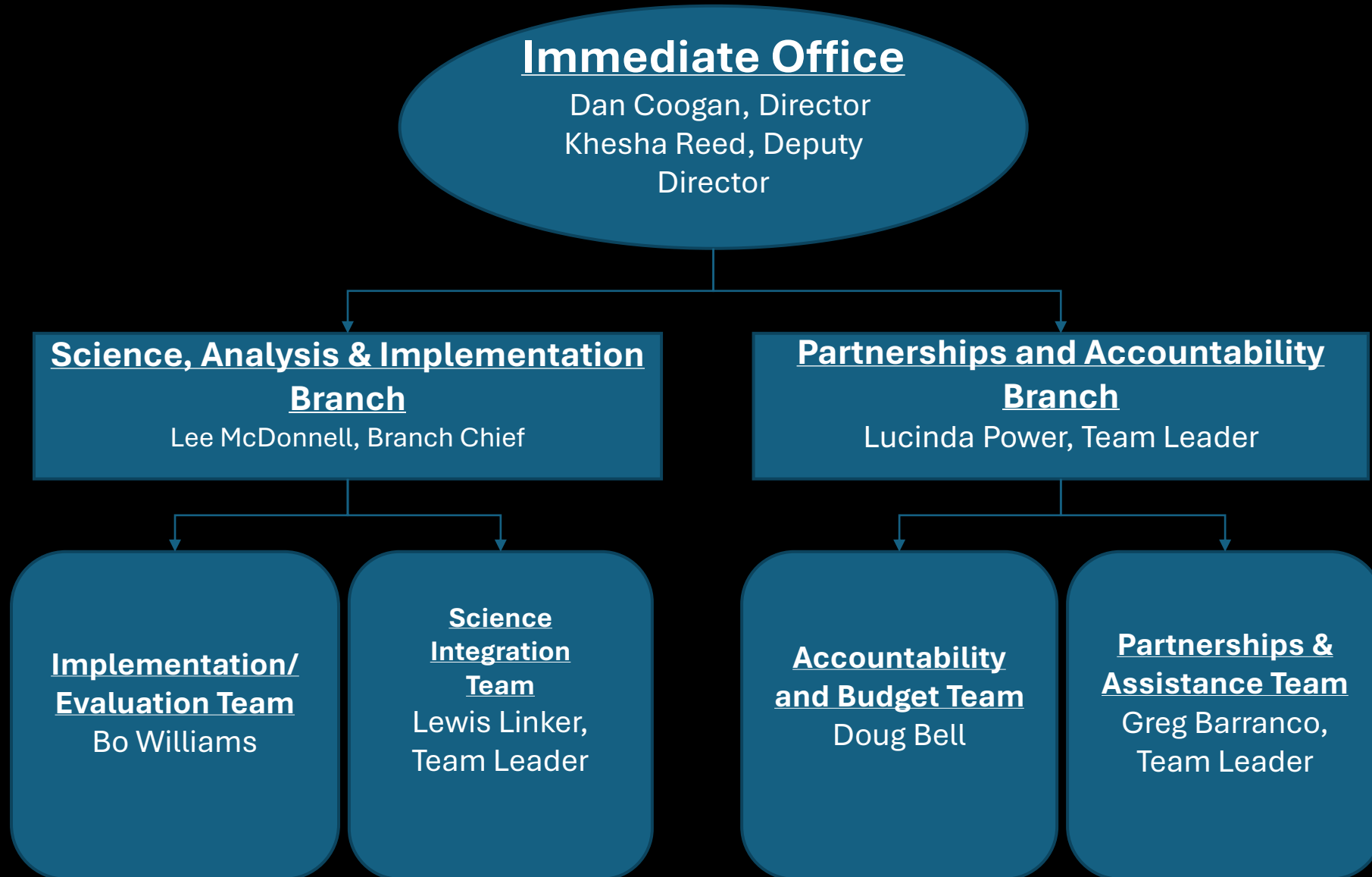
Consistent Opportunities for Public Participation

- Standard practices at all CBP public meetings
- Promote accountability and inclusivity.

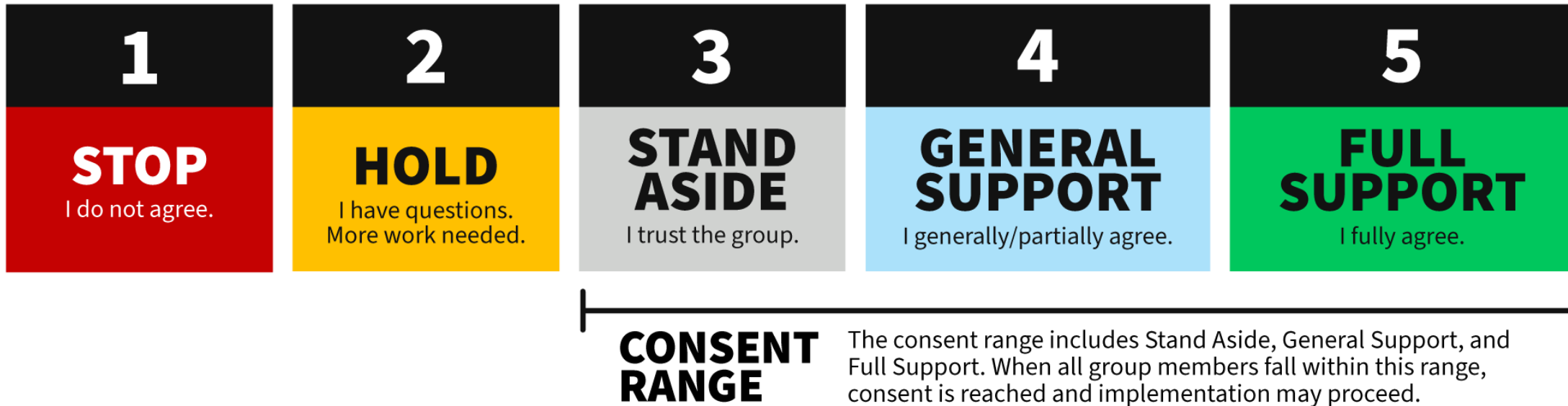
GO Team – Administrative/Governance (GIT6)



CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM OFFICE



CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM DECISION MAKING MODEL

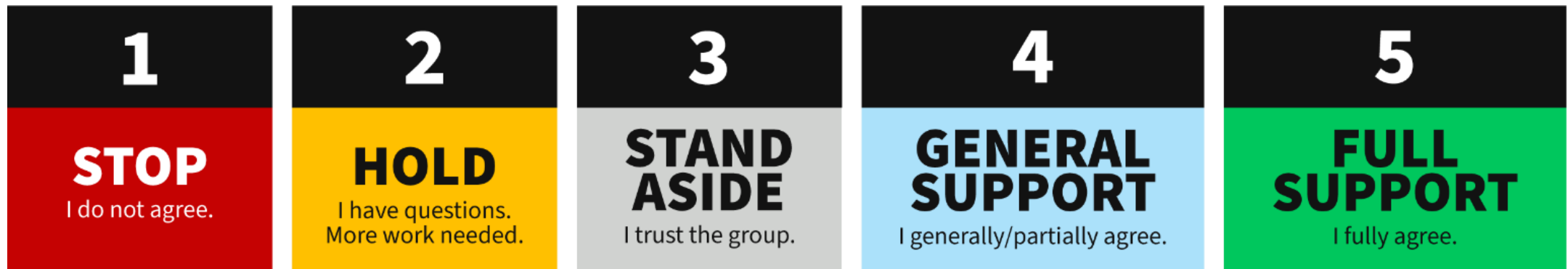


b) If consent is not achieved: Voting Members register “Yay” or “Nay”

Key Changes

The partnership previously utilized a **consensus**-based decision-making approach. Under new Governance and Management Framework, the partnership makes **consent**-based decisions.

- **Consensus:** Each participant in a decision-making process registers a “5 - Full Support” on a proposed decision.
- **Consent:** Each participant in a decision-making process registers a “3”, “4”, or “5”. A decision is considered accepted if consent is achieved.



CONSENT RANGE

The consent range includes Stand Aside, General Support, and Full Support. When all group members fall within this range, consent is reached and implementation may proceed.

Consensus Continuum



Key Changes (continued)

- A **quorum is needed** to make decisions
 - For workgroups, two thirds of voting* members must be present
- A **member-by-member vote is triggered if consent cannot be reached unanimously** after several iterations
- **Two thirds of the workgroup voting members** must support a decision for it to be approved

*Note: on 7/10, Clean Water Goal Team Leadership confirmed that CWGT Workgroups will not have non-voting members

Consent-based Decision-Making Process

1. Group leadership and members **identify a decision topic**; decision topic is formally identified on the meeting agenda and posted with supporting materials with required advance notice
 - a. *“An agenda and any decisional documents are circulated at least five business days before the meeting. Members may not be expected to make decisions on topics where materials were not provided within the five-business day timeframe.”*
2. **Ensure appropriate quorum exists** before beginning decision-making process
 - a. *“A quorum of a workgroup is established when two thirds of voting members are present.”*
3. All members of the group discuss the topic
 - a. *“...opportunity for members of the public to participate in discussions with and provide feedback to program members is provided at the discretion of the chair(s)”* – engaging all stakeholders, not just WG members, is and will continue to be a core principle of the AgWG
4. Informed by discussion, **a decision proposal is developed/presented** to the group

Consent-based Decision-Making Process

5. **Call for consent** – Chair will request any members who would not support the proposed decision (or stand aside to enable it to pass) to articulate their concerns.
 - a. If no members raise concerns, the decision will be approved by consent.
 - b. If members *do* raise concerns, additional steps must be taken.
6. **Concerns are identified and addressed**
 - a. *“Dissenting members are expected to propose alternatives, suggest maintaining the status quo, or outline a process for developing an alternative so that concerns can be constructively addressed.”*
 - b. *“If needed, the decision may be deferred to a subsequent meeting of the... workgroup to allow time for resolution.”*
7. **Decision proposal is modified**
 - a. *“The proposal may be revised to address identified concerns. The process then returns to the call for decision.”*
8. **Repeat call for consent**
 - a. If no members raise concerns, the decision will be approved by consent.
 - b. If members raise concerns with the revised proposal, the group may 1) conduct another proposal modification and consensus attempt, or 2) proceed to a vote.

Voting Process

“**If consent cannot be reached** unanimously after several iterations, **voting members will vote** using the appropriate threshold for their group.”

- “Threshold” for workgroups is two thirds of voting members

1. After several attempts to achieve consent fail, the Chair calls for a vote
2. Each member individually states their position on the decision-making continuum (1-5) to be recorded by the workgroup staffer
3. Concerns associated with any stop (1) or hold (2) votes are articulated and recorded with the vote results

Vote Outcome:

- If two thirds of the workgroup’s voting members register a 3, 4, or 5, the decision passes.
- If fewer than two thirds of the workgroup’s voting members register a 3, 4, or 5, the decision does not pass and is elevated, along with the results of the failed vote, to the Clean Water Goal Team

Decision Making by Email

“If after discussion, formation and modification of a proposal, members need additional time to obtain their organization’s position, decision positions may be collected via email to finalize the decision.”

1. Decision topic is identified and posted
2. Decision proposal is formed, discussed, and modified during the meeting
3. For time-sensitive decisions and when members can obtain their organization’s vote before the following workgroup meeting, the Chair will note that the decision will be finalized via email
4. Workgroup staff will send an email with the decision proposal and a clear and reasonable deadline for submitting votes
5. The outcome of the decision finalized through email will be shared at the following workgroup meeting and publicly documented in the workgroup’s Actions and Decisions log

Governance and Management Framework Webinar

- ~ on or about July 28
- Will likely be recorded

Interested Parties Lists – reach out to staffers
for each workgroup



Questions?