

# **Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**

## **Decision Making Framework**

(November 4, 2016)

### **Decision-Making**

- 1) **Consensus as the Fundamental Principle:** The TAC shall strive for consensus (agreement among all participants) in all of its decision-making. Working toward consensus is a fundamental principle.
- 2) **Definition of “Consensus”:** Consensus means that all committee members either “support,” “support with reservations” or “abstain,” which means they may have significant disagreements but they do not want to hold up the process. If everyone present votes in one of the above three categories, consensus is achieved. A fourth voting option is “block.” If anyone votes “block,” then consensus is not achieved.
- 3) **Less than 100% Consensus Decision:** The TAC is consensus seeking but shall not limit itself to strict consensus if 100% agreement among all participants cannot be reached after all interests and options have been thoroughly identified, explored, and discussed. If, after full exploration, the TAC is still unable to reach consensus, the TAC will move the proposal forward when a super-majority of 80% is reached. Reasons for disagreement will be captured and given to the Management Committee for review along with the voting results.

### **Facilitation**

The Chair facilitates the meeting. (See PREP By-Laws for details on how Chair is chosen.)

Currently, the PREP Coastal Scientist will act as Chair. After two meetings, this decision will be re-assessed; it may be decided that an additional facilitator will be necessary. The Chair will:

- Formulate the agenda and desired outcomes for all meetings based on input of members and facilitate those proceedings.
- Identify and synthesize points of agreement and disagreement for the written meeting summaries.
- Assist in building consensus among members.
- Advocate for a fair, effective, and credible process, but remain impartial with respect to the outcome of the deliberations.

### **Meeting Attendees**

The Chair is also responsible for making sure that each meeting has a core group of relevant experts to make the discussion as informed as possible. The date should be chosen to ensure appropriate attendance of key experts and stakeholders. Once the date is set, the broader group of attendees can be invited.

### **Scientific Integrity**

TAC meetings will operate according to the guiding principles of the Scientific Integrity Policy as set forth by the National Science Foundation, as referenced below<sup>1</sup>:

- Production of data collections and research results should be objective and not influenced by financial interests or affiliations;
- Nor should scientific or technological findings be suppressed or altered by political officials.

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<sup>1</sup> 2010. NSF. Scientific Integrity Policy. Memorandum from the Office of Science and Technology Policy. Accessed 3 November 2016. <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/si/sipolicy.pdf>