Breakout Session Question Overview

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1. What is a **pressing question or challenge** facing the Chesapeake Bay Program that social scientists are uniquely qualified to tackle in collaboration with natural and physical sciences?
2. What **barriers exist to collaboration** between social and natural scientists, and how can we overcome them?
3. How can we **better communicate the value** of social science insights to natural science practitioners and policymakers?

What is a **pressing question or challenge** facing the Chesapeake Bay Program that social scientists are uniquely qualified to tackle in collaboration with natural and physical sciences?

- Understanding behavior change, how to change behavior
  - Ethical issues (manipulation), lack of trust
- Where (critical) decisions are made – landowners, local and state and federal officials.
  - Local decisions (e.g., zoning) are not responsive to federal government but have large impacts (collectively)
- Why and how decisions are made
- What are the tradeoffs of the decisions we make?
  - Balancing the use and allocation of resources
- What are people's preferences (and how do they vary) across different Bay-related outcomes or restoration projects?
  - Understanding how the *expression* of preferences varies (stormwater v. flooding)
- Social scientists should be part of the conversation at the beginning

What **barriers exist to collaboration** between social and natural scientists, and how can we overcome them?

- Bias toward quantitative data (among natural scientists)
  - “Hard science” versus “soft science” – negative attitudes, language
  - Labeling each other without being knowledgeable about others’ work
- Different terminology and language across disciplines
  - The language of academia and institutions can also be a barrier to communication with policymakers and stakeholders
- Misunderstanding of what social scientists do
- Workflow needs to be improved to achieve better feedback between natural and social scientists and policy outcomes
  - Natural scientists need to understand what social science question is being asked
- Scales of observations are often different (census blocks v. stream sensors)
  - Precision of measurement differs (maybe)

How can we better communicate the value of social science insights to natural science practitioners and policymakers?

- Focus on social outcomes (and terminology) as justification for all the work we're doing; social outcomes should be the basis for recommendations
  - Social science insights should inherently be useful
    - We shouldn't have to justify social science findings
  - We don't have to label social science insights in STAC or CBP reports
  - We should continue to focus on the societal benefits (sustainable use, economic benefits)
    - Nature and people
- Keep social scientists in the conversation
- Specific examples of social scientists helping with policy
  - Marine protected areas were preserved because social scientists showed their economic value
  - Stormwater program was supported by policymakers, but the program lacked public buy-in
  - Social scientists cannot *solve* policy problems, mainly we only study them (and can provide some insight)