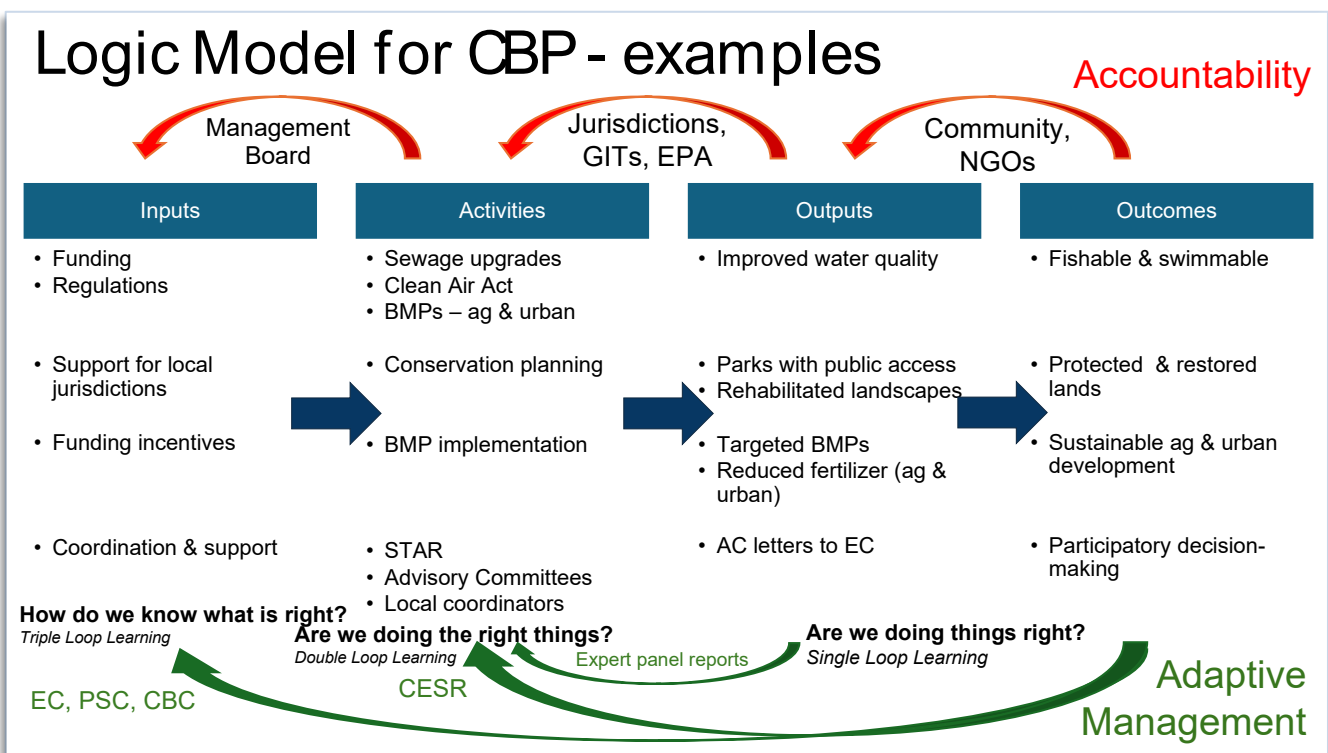




Governance & Decision-Making in the Chesapeake Bay Program

This framework below illustrates how governance and decision-making function within the Chesapeake Bay Program. It is intended as a discussion tool rather than a final product. It shows how technical information, partner input, and state and federal actions feed into the Management Board's decisions, and how feedback loops support accountability and adaptive management across the partnership.



- Governance is structured around multiple loops of learning: *Are we doing things right? Are we doing the right things? How do we know what is right?*
- Consensus is the default, but decision-making requires flexibility when tradeoffs or impasses emerge.
- Adaptive management and accountability mechanisms (CAST updates, CESR, annual reviews) help track progress and guide adjustments.
- STAC provides independent science and synthesis through expert panels and reports, strengthening transparency and decision-making.

This framework should be seen as a starting point, not an endpoint; it represents the current functioning of the CBP partnership, which may not be the framework that will ultimately best achieve the desired outcomes for the Bay and its watershed.