

COG's Policy Principles for the Restoration and Protection of the Chesapeake Bay and its Tributaries

(As adopted under COG Board Resolution R20-09)

Local governments and wastewater utilities in the COG region are active partners in efforts to restore and protect the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and bear much of the responsibility for implementing policies and programs toward that end. COG has a long record of support for such policies and programs and in 1997 adopted four policy principles (see attached) to guide policy development and program implementation. Recently, COG's Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee reviewed the 1997 principles and identified several areas where updating is warranted. The CBPC proposes that the following principles replace those adopted in 1997.

- I. Holistic Requirements** – Programs and policies to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, whether regulatory or not, shall reflect a holistic, multi-sector analysis of environmental benefits, technical feasibility and costs before being established.
 - **Rationale** – *It is important to look beyond traditional measures, such as monetary costs and pounds of pollutants reduced. In light of many competing environmental demands and funding constraints, there should be full recognition of environmental benefits and costs and multi-media implications in developing all policies, regulations and programs.*

- II. Equitable Responsibility** – Programs and policies to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries shall strive for equity and cost-effectiveness in allocating responsibilities among regions, counties and municipalities and among the different sources of pollution.
 - **Rationale** – *Local governments and utilities recognize their responsibility to implement programs and projects to help improve and protect water quality. It is critical that the sources of pollution from all sectors be adequately addressed so that water quality is improved and the investment produces tangible results with equitable sharing of the overall responsibility.*

- III. Sound Science** – Programs and policies to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries shall rely on a sound scientific foundation and shall be revised as needed, reflecting advances in that foundation.
 - **Rationale** – *Even when sound science does provide the basis for programs and policies to protect water quality, that basis will and should change as new information is determined. Accordingly, water quality programs and policies should be open to adaptation to reflect new scientific findings.*

- IV. Communication and Voice** - Programs and policies to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, whether regulatory or not, should be developed through a cooperative process among stakeholders including local governments and wastewater utilities. Given their implementation responsibilities, local governments and wastewater utilities shall be engaged at the earliest stages of these development processes.
 - **Rationale** – *Local governments and wastewater utilities are the primary implementers of wastewater and urban stormwater management projects. Not only do they have substantial financial obligations, they also have extensive expertise and experience to offer. Their input early in the processes is critical to ensure that effective and realistic programs and policies are developed.*