

Issues raised at May 1-2, 2000 Visioning and Strategic Planning Meeting:

Group 1

1. Too much dependence on volunteer time.
2. Clarification of roles and responsibilities.
 - Signatories
 - SENRLG principals
 - SENRLG Executive Committee
 - SAMAB Cooperative
 - SAMAB Executive Committee
 - SAMAB Foundation
 - SAMAB Foundation Executive Committee
 - SAMAB Working Committees
 - SAMAB Coordinating Office
 - States
 - Universities
 - Staff
 - SENRLG Executive Director
 - SAMAB Executive Director
 - Foundation Development Director
3. Who are our real customers/stakeholders? How do we reach them? What do provide for them?
4. Funding
 - Long term
 - Administrative support
 - Long term projects
 - Short term projects
5. Annual report
6. Emphasize the need for cooperation across boundaries: state, political, agency, sectoral
7. Vehicle as a way to bring in Native American tribes and diverse groups.
8. Publish strategic plan with roles, responsibilities, and deadlines.
9. Process for adopting new projects.
10. Commitment by agencies to work on SAMAB projects.
11. Value communication processes that SAMAB creates and other intangibles.
12. Define and foster the “creative” relationship between the Cooperative and the Foundation.
13. Focus and prioritize projects to match available resources. Don’t over extend.
14. Possible Focus Areas
 - Watershed systems
 - Information, data management, sharing
 - Community-based planning

Group 2

1. "Not broken" more funding resources needed.
2. Federal agencies – get in or get out.
3. Most people/groups are at capacity.
4. Interim resources – transition plan for between 09/30/00 and sustainability.
5. Process for prioritization and planning of inter-group activities in long-term/ strategic time frame.
6. Need political support (community involvement).
7. Identify commitments that we keep.
8. Mechanism needed for SAMAB participants to take the next step and follow through.
9. Focus – prioritize with available resources.
 - Not just dollars
 - Get SAMAB into performance plans, not just enthusiastic people.
10. Develop champions.
11. Difficult for structured organizations to react to/understand complex, chaotic processes.
12. Government systems are geared to report short-term products – de-values long-term development of relationships/programs.

Group 3

1. Focus on specific projects quickly.
2. Assure objectives of SAMAB activities.
3. Improve land management through interagency and inter-sector sharing of information.
4. Clarify roles, responsibilities, and relationships (SENRLG, SAMAB, councils, foundation, committees – near and long-term aspects).
5. Improve ability to define and sustain major projects.
6. Limited success of committees and initiatives.
7. Build projects around ongoing agency programs.
8. Improve SAMAB accountability.
9. SAMAB projects have short attention spans.
10. Clarify vision and mission.
11. Strengthen process of setting goals and objectives.
12. Identify stakeholders and partners.
13. Identify limits of what can be accomplished (balancing coordination and projects.)
14. Work within agency mission and budget constraints.
15. Increase, diversify, and leverage funding.

Key Points (sorted by appropriate issues)

Goals and Objectives

1, 2, 7, 10, 11

a) Organizational Relationships

3, 4, 7, 9, 12, 13

b) SAMAB Performance

6, 7, 8, 9, 13

Support (Agency and Others)

5, 7, 9, 14, 15

Group 4

1. Lack of communication between SAMAB and participating agencies.
2. Need to better define “critical regional issues” and communicate them.
3. Define relationships among member agencies and participants in SAMAB.
4. Connect SAMAB resources to local community conservation efforts, organizing, and planning.
5. What do we mean by “local community efforts”?
6. Perception that SAMAB is academic effort of people talking to each other, but never getting anything done.
7. SAMAB Executive Committee needs to redefine itself (decide how we operate, how we make decisions, etc.).
8. Validate “networking” as a reasonable goal for SAMAB.
9. SAMAB often torn by conflicting partisan politics (e.g., MAB issue, conflicting politics between Congress and Executive branch).
10. SAMAB program – dilution of effort, trying to be all things to all people, instead of focusing on a few key items.
11. Executive Director role needs clearer direction, expectations, and support (from Executive Committee).
12. SAMAB opportunities – continue to co-sponsor workshops, meetings like the Appalachian Studies Conference.
13. What can SAMAB uniquely do that no other organization can do?
14. Redefine roles of SAMAB Executive Committee and SAMAB Foundation – part of confusion is because we’re meeting together. (All the time? Sometimes? Managed!)
15. What is history/role of SAMAB Executive Committee, SAMI, SAMAB Foundation, SENRLG, CESU, MAB reserves, LTER (Coweeta)? Focus on benefits rather than conflict.
16. Pooling resources between agencies (problems – funding issues, people issues) – it’s hard, but it’s what we do best (e.g. Watershed efforts).
17. What’s the States’ role in SAMAB? SAMI is meeting right now; conflicts with our dates – we need to coordinate.
18. Potential for SAMAB to play a role in K-12 education. (This is where future ideas and views of future for the region are being formed.)

Group 5

1. Define: Whom does SAMAB report to?
 - Executive Director
 - Executive Committee/Cooperative
 - SAMAB Foundation
2. Legislative/Funding restraints
3. Communications issues
 - Internal to agency
 - Across agencies
 - Among SAMAB/SENRLG/Foundation, et. al.
4. How to get people/\$ to accomplish objectives/mission.
5. Alignment of SAMAB and agencies with issues and priorities.
6. Limited success of committees and initiatives.
7. What is relationship between SAMAB/SENRLG?
8. MAB/Biospheres reserves
9. Roles of States and non-Federal entities
10. Relationship of Southern Appalachians with CESU and SAMAB.
11. Relationship and other collaborative of universities/academia in SAMAB.
12. Relationship of SAMAB and local communities.
13. Sustainability of SAMAB (funding).
14. Better tracking of inputs (\$ and in-kind) and outputs (process, products, relationships, etc.).

Critical Success Factors for SAMAB and Foundation – May 1, 2000

TOTAL	<i>Weighted</i>	<i>Number</i>	
	<i>Votes</i>	<i>Of Votes</i>	
48	27	21	• More long-range interagency planning and funding for joint projects, providing value added to each agency. Institutional expectations. Integrate program delivery at community level.
44	28	16	• Comprehensive set of processes that yields cycle of communication to stakeholders for purpose of funding, getting people enthusiastic, building partnerships, collaboration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategic Plan ○ Implementation Plan ○ Annual Report ○ Political Strategy
41	21	20	• SAMAB functions as a regional electronic clearinghouse (including SARIS).
40	24	16	• Solid support from member agencies (people, resources, political support).
31	19	12	• Sub-group of SAMAB Cooperative to clarify roles and responsibilities.
29	14	15	• Focus on the Foundation and strengthen it to the same stature as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.
21	11	10	• Communities recognize and use SAMAB as source of information for resource and sustainability issues.
21	10	11	• Be sure to have focused projects with identified active participants who follow through.
19	8	11	• Concentrate on those issues that no other organization could do alone.
18	10	8	• SAMAB is self-sustaining and thriving and giving away money.
17	7	10	• Effective communication strategies.
15	10	5	• SAMAB projects result in community-based research, involving students to incorporate into education curricula in the region. Enhances ecological and cultural literacy in the region.
15	6	9	• Get broader involvement in SAMAB (states, university, communities, ngos, local government, etc.).
13	8	5	• Better job of marketing SAMAB capabilities and accomplishments.
13	4	9	• Local conservation groups have enhanced success as a result of SAMAB collaboration.
13	3	10	• Products and services are highly relevant to stakeholders (all).
9	4	5	• Foundation provides administrative support to cooperative with multi-year funding.
7	3	4	• The time comes when the value of participation in MAB is realized.
7	0	7	• Highly functional organizational structure – consensus-based.
6	1	5	• “Sustainability” would replace “growth” as regional buzzword.
6	0	6	• Each current Executive Committee member schedules a meeting with signatory. Come back to next SAMAB Cooperative meeting with one idea of priority project for collaboration by SAMAB.
4	0	4	• Influence/broker regional community planning function to incorporate natural resources values – SAMAB Seal of Approval.
4	0	4	• Revitalize the development wing of SAMAB (both Cooperative and Foundation) EDA, FHA, etc.
3	0	3	• Actively generating ideas and products “on-the-ground” along with research.

3	0	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agencies would share responsibility for representation of SAMAB at various organizations or functions (SAMAB members need materials/tools to help them play this role).
0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognized for success stories and projects, e.g. SAA relationships.
0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAMAB meetings are recognized as regular means of choice to disseminate information.

Building the capacity of the Cooperative and Foundation

- Be sure to have focused projects with identified active participants who follow through.
- Better job of marketing SAMAB capabilities and accomplishments.
- Comprehensive set of processes that yields cycle of communication to stakeholders for purpose of funding, getting people enthusiastic, building partnerships, collaboration.
 - Strategic Plan
 - Implementation Plan
 - Annual Report
 - Political Strategy
- Each current Executive Committee member schedules a meeting with signatory. Come back to next SAMAB Cooperative meeting with one idea of priority project for collaboration by SAMAB.
- Effective communication strategies.
- Focus on the Foundation and strengthen it to the same stature as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.
- Foundation provides administrative support to cooperative with multi-year funding.
- Get broader involvement in SAMAB (states, university, communities, ngos, local government, etc.).
- Highly functional organizational structure – consensus-based.
- More long-range interagency planning and funding for joint projects, providing value added to each agency. Institutional expectations. Integrate program delivery at community level.
- Products and services are highly relevant to stakeholders (all).
- Revitalize the development wing of SAMAB (both Cooperative and Foundation) EDA, FHA, etc.
- SAMAB functions as a regional electronic clearinghouse (including SARIS).
- SAMAB is self-sustaining and thriving and giving away money.
- SAMAB meetings are recognized as regular means of choice to disseminate information.
- Solid support from member agencies (people, resources, political support).
- Sub-group of SAMAB Cooperative to clarify roles and responsibilities.
- The agencies would share responsibility for representation of SAMAB at various organizations or functions (SAMAB members need materials/tools to help them play this role).

Program/External Relations

- Actively generating ideas and products “on-the-ground” along with research.
- Communities recognize and use SAMAB as source of information for resource and sustainability issues.
- Concentrate on those issues that no other organization could do alone.
- Effective communication strategies.
- Influence/broker regional community planning function to incorporate natural resources values – SAMAB Seal of Approval.
- Local conservation groups have enhanced success as a result of SAMAB collaboration.
- More long-range interagency planning and funding for joint projects, providing value added to each agency. Institutional expectations. Integrate program delivery at community level.
- Products and services are highly relevant to stakeholders (all).
- Recognized for success stories and projects, e.g. SAA relationships.
- SAMAB projects result in community-based research, involving students to incorporate into education curricula in the region. Enhances ecological and cultural literacy in the region.
- “Sustainability” would replace “growth” as regional buzzword.
- The time comes when the value of participation in MAB is realized.

