

Community engagement through listening sessions

The first step in the COAST Card framework involves engaging a diverse set of stakeholders to provide local perspectives for co-developing the Potomac COAST Card. From 2022-2023, six community listening sessions were conducted across the Potomac watershed and included activities aimed at answering the questions below:

Why should you care?

Establishing a shared understanding with community stakeholders and identifying their perspectives on current conditions, including values and threats facing the watershed, can effectively lay the building blocks for identification of potential indicators in the development of a socio-environmental report card.

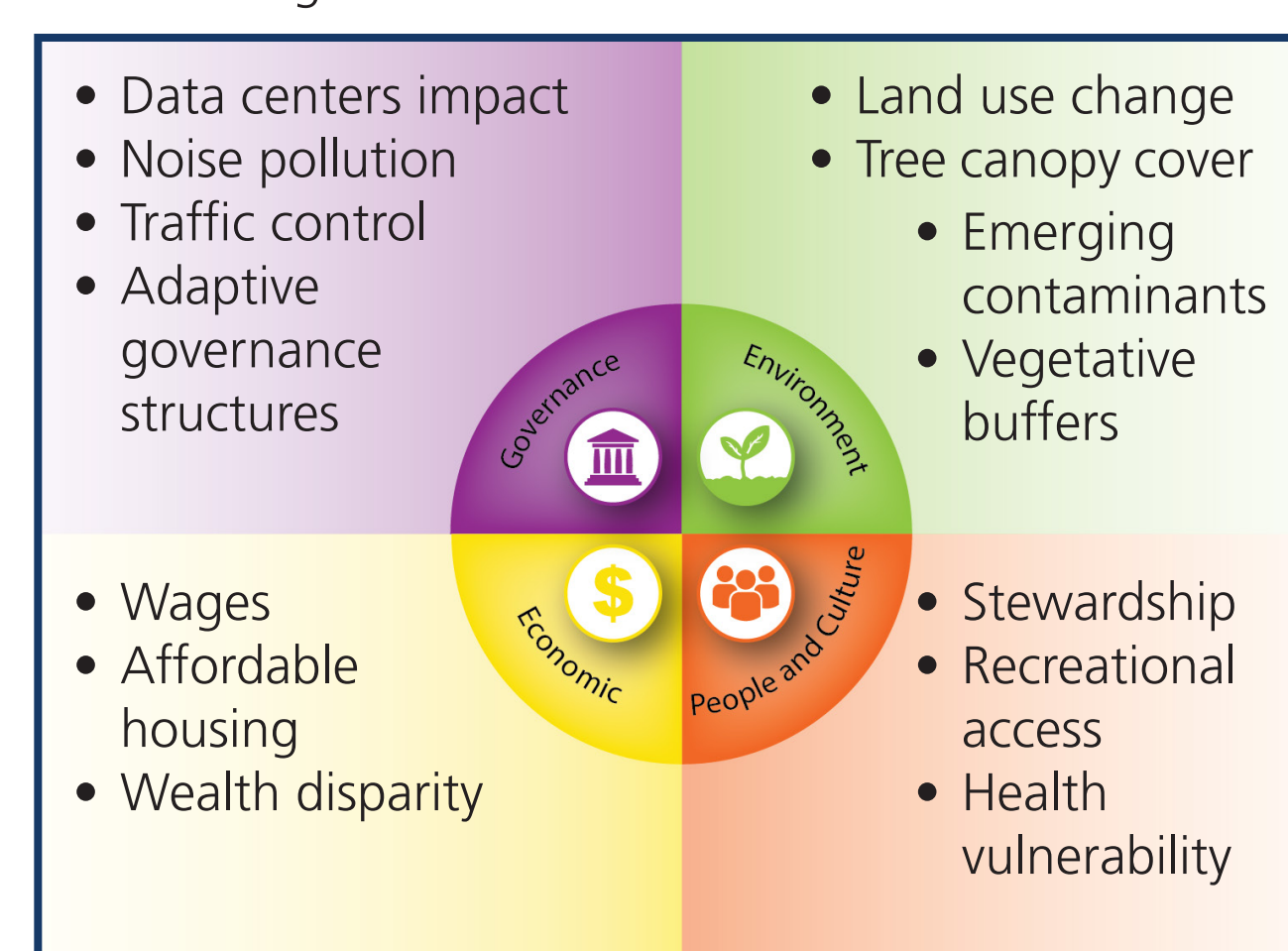


Cumberland, MD: Participants stopped by to engage with our activities (top) and identified traits they value about the Potomac (bottom).

What do we measure?

After taking stakeholder perspectives into account, the next step is identifying social, cultural, economic, and governance indicators in order to co-develop a holistic socio-environmental report card.

Woodbridge, VA: Considering values and threats to the Potomac, participants identified potential indicators in four categories.



Who should be involved?

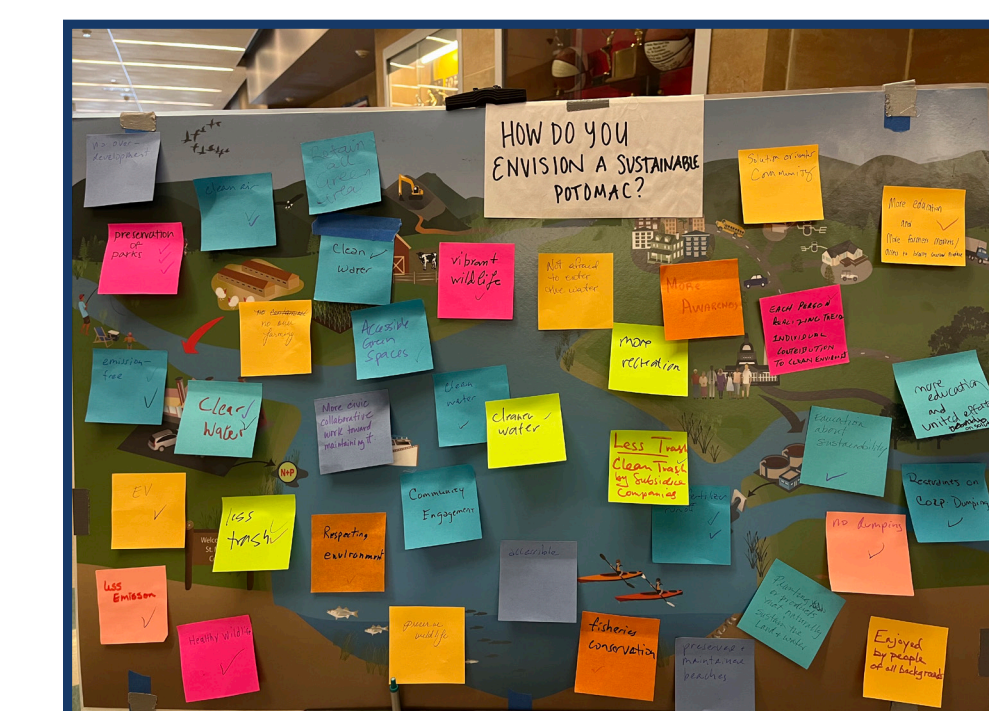
Identifying people and organizations involved in Potomac watershed issues and determining who else should be included to improve collaborations are key features of social network analysis.



Frederick, MD: Participants engaging in a social network analysis activity.

Where do we go?

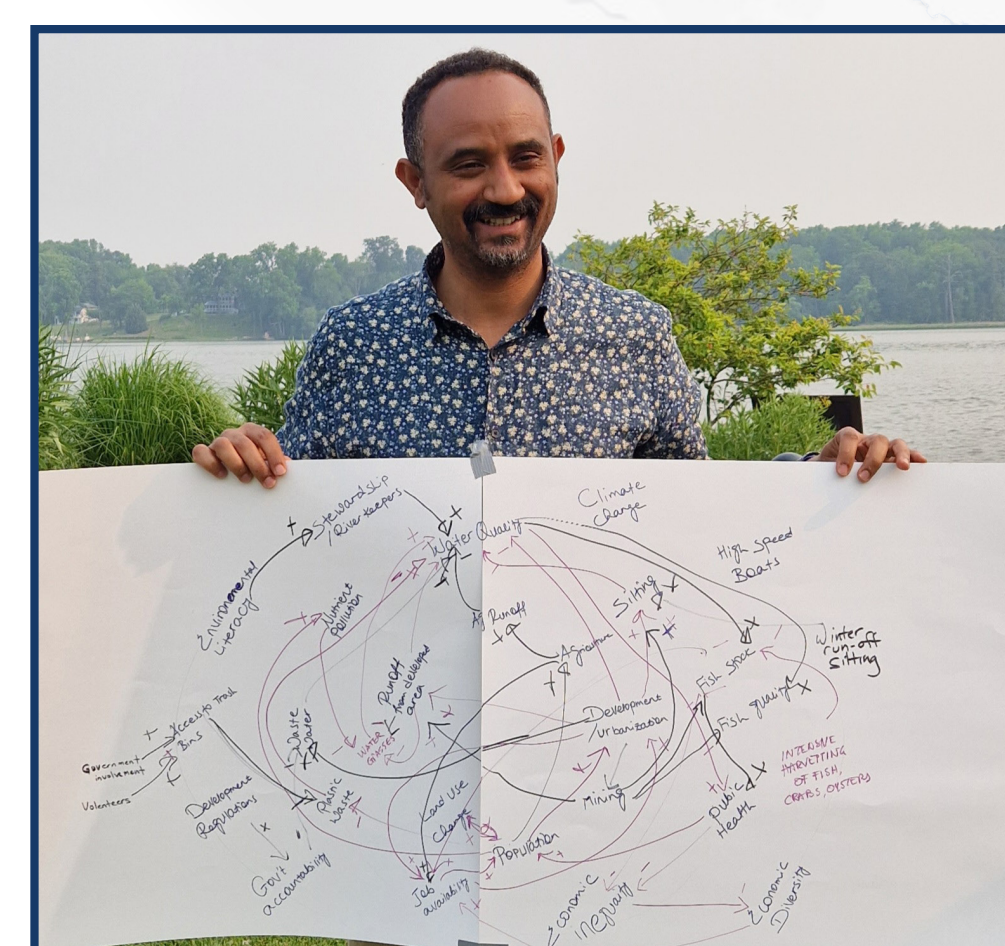
Developing a shared vision and path forward for the watershed is necessary to ensure that the Potomac COAST card will be useful to the community.



Silver Spring, MD (top) and Alexandria, VA (bottom): Participants expressed their vision for a sustainable Potomac and actions needed to achieve that vision.

What can be done?

Using system dynamics modeling, actions are ranked by quantifying indicator relationships, assessing management scenarios, and making recommendations for better solutions. This approach aims to bring scorecards to life by reproducing the dynamics of nature through a model representation of the underlying causal system's structure.



Leonardtown, MD: The system dynamics modeling activity resulted in a web of complex connections.