



# MOBILE BAY NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

March 31, 2023

*International Trade Center  
Killian Room*

**Good Morning!**  
**Please sign-in**  
**before you leave.**



*Graham Creek Preserve, Foley*



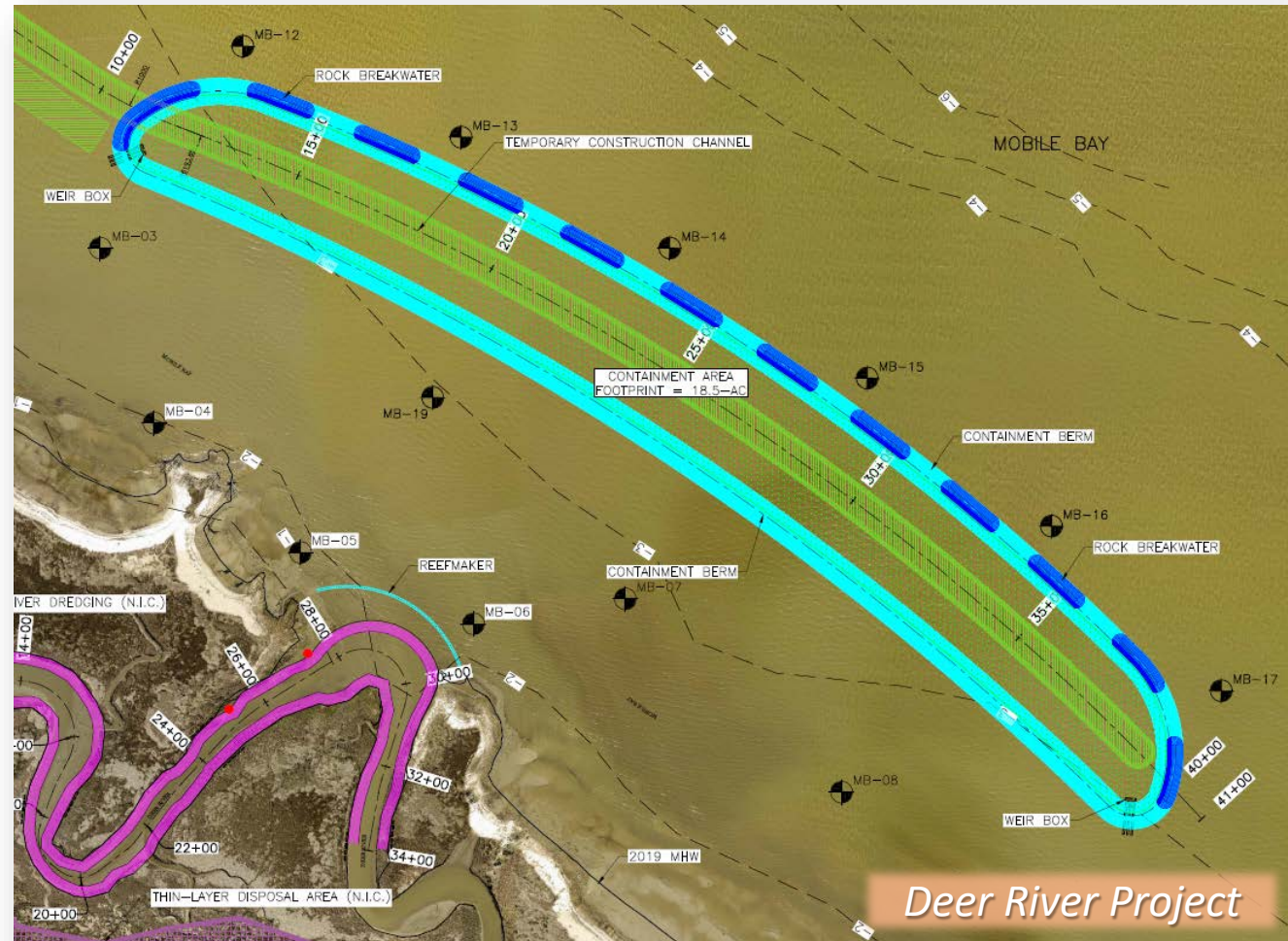
# AGENDA

- Introductions/Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- Committee Reports
  - SAC (4/6/2023)
  - CAC
  - PIC
  - BRC
  - GNC
  - FIN (TBD)
- Director's Report/Old Business
  - Key Accomplishments
  - Evaluation Status Report
- New Business
  - Organizational Assessment-Part 1
- Other/Announcements/Adjourn

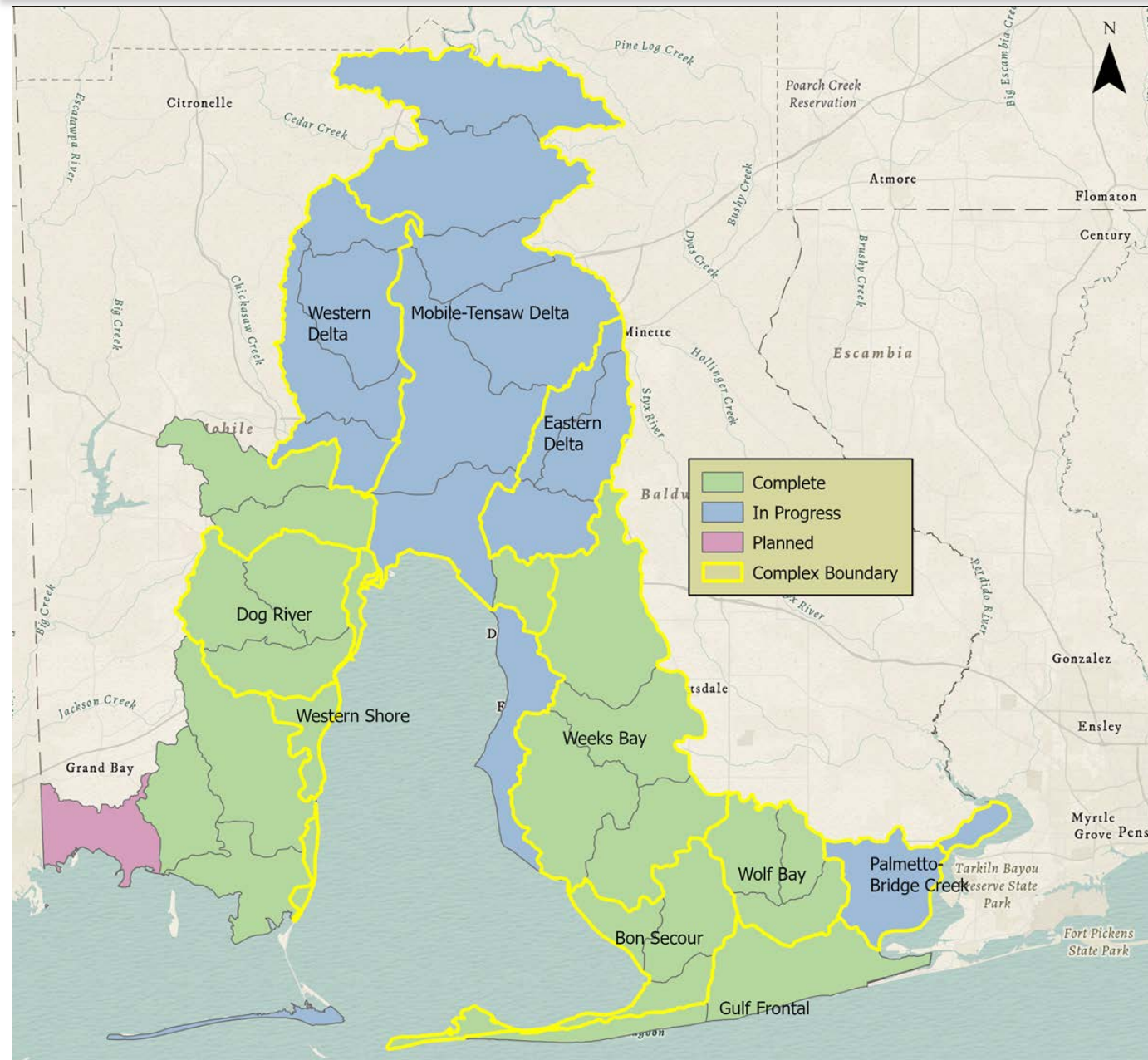


## PIC Meeting: March 30, 2023 *(In-person)*

- Review of ongoing and forthcoming planning activities, including:
  - Watershed Plan Assessment
  - Western Shore Shoreline Management Plan
  - CCMP



# WATERSHED PLANNING UPDATE



Watershed	Status
Western Shore	Complete
Gulf Frontal	Complete
D'Olive Update	Complete
MTA Delta	Wrapping Up
Eastern Shore	Wrapping Up
Dauphin Island	Wrapping Up
Perdido	In Progress
Western Delta	In Progress
Eastern Delta	In Progress
Grand Bay	On Deck

# MBNEP RESTORATION PROJECTS UPDATE



- **D'Olive**
  - Canterbury construction complete
  - Pine Run – on hold pending new ownership
- **Lower Fish River**
  - Marlow – warranty and maintenance
  - Magnolia River Watershed
  - Landowner access continues
- **Fowl River**
  - 100% design and final permit review
- **Three Mile Creek**
  - 12-Mile Warranty
  - Apple snail treatment continues
  - COM portion to begin soon
- **Deer River**
  - Pre-bid meeting today



*Fowl River Spits visit*

# Government Networks Committee



- Reviewed CCMP Technical Assistance & Capacity Building Goals & Objectives
- Overview of 2023 Legislative agenda
- Overview of Critical Issues for Shoreline Management in Coastal Alabama



## CAC Meeting: March 22, 2023 *(In-person)*

- Discussed goals and objectives of CAC and methods to increase committee growth
- Planning outreach, including:
  - Nature Tours
  - Community Clean Ups
  - Collaborations with other MC committees
  - Water monitoring workshops



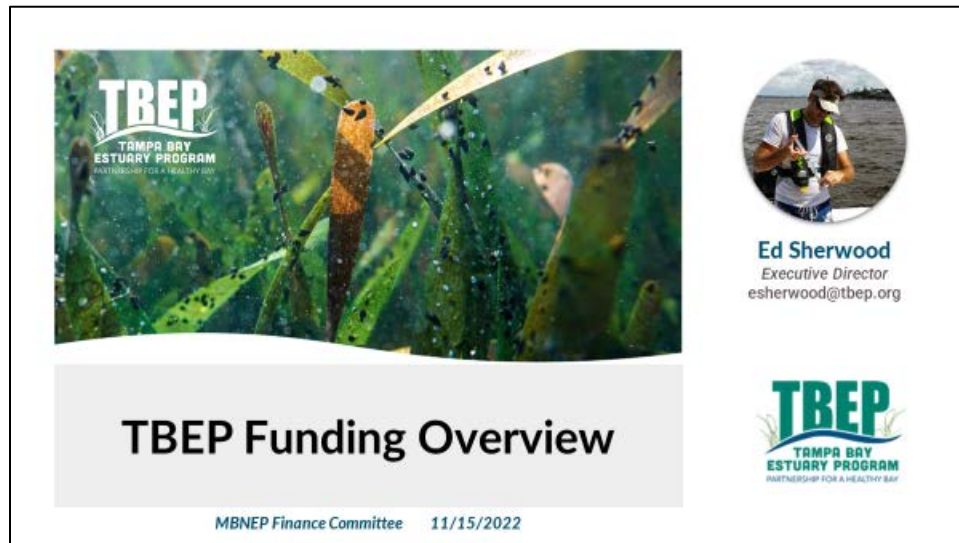


## BRC Meeting: March 22, 2023 *(Field Visit)*


- Toured Admiral Shellfish Company oyster farm
  - West end of Fort Morgan
  - Growing industry
  - One million oysters!
- Private sector collaboration analysis
  - What value does/can the BRC offer?
  - How can we increase that value while still aligning with our mission?




- Helene Hassell has stepped down as Co-Chair
- Interlocal Memorandum of Understanding
- Process for refilling Co-Chair seat



**TBEP**  
TAMPA BAY  
ESTUARY PROGRAM  
PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY BAY



**Ed Sherwood**  
Executive Director  
esherwood@tbep.org



**TBEP**  
TAMPA BAY  
ESTUARY PROGRAM  
PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY BAY

## TBEP Funding Overview

MBNEP Finance Committee 11/15/2022

## INTERAGENCY MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Baldwin County Commission  
and  
Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium dba  
Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

This Agreement is entered into between the MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES CONSORTIUM THROUGH ITS MOBILE BAY NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM (hereinafter referred to as the "MBNEP") and the BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSION, the governing body of Baldwin County, Alabama (hereinafter referred to as the "COUNTY").

Whereas, Mobile Bay and Alabama's estuaries, fed by the fourth largest river system in the United States and representing some of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in North America, are invaluable resources for the State and local communities in Baldwin County and the health of the aforementioned is deeply intertwined to the heritage and economy of coastal Alabama; and

Whereas, Baldwin County's population is projected to grow over 65% through 2040 and the conversion of natural landscape to impervious cover has caused increases in volume and velocity of stormwater runoff resulting in increased flooding; non-point source pollution impacts that include trash and litter, pathogens, and nutrients; channel erosion; degraded habitats and infrastructure; and deteriorated water quality in its tributaries and creeks that ultimately transport non-point source pollution and sediment into Perdido and Mobile bays; and

Whereas, the COUNTY has a long-term interest in maintaining the quality of local waters and natural areas, reducing negative impacts associated with stormwater runoff, increasing resilience, and preserving the cultural character of coastal communities, ensuring bountiful populations of fish and wildlife, and providing access to its natural areas; and

Whereas, the MBNEP has long term interest in the provision of information and science to citizens and decision makers for the development of sound public policy for the management of the coastal resources of Alabama, particularly through implementation of a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) for Alabama's estuaries; and

Whereas, the MBNEP was recognized by the USEPA as one of 28 estuaries of national significance with a mission to promote the wise stewardship of the water quality and living resource base of Alabama's estuaries and coast; with the purpose of bringing together engaged and diverse communities committed to developing consensus on what our ecosystem priorities are, how to achieve them, and how to facilitate and promote their implementation; and

Whereas, the COUNTY recognizes the purposes for which the MBNEP was organized to include the protection and conservation of Alabama's estuarine systems which benefit and protect Baldwin County's environment and the overall well-being of its residents and visitors within the MBNEP service area, including the entirety of Baldwin County.

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT: KEY ACTIVITIES- ANNUAL MEETINGS



Year	Total Attendees
2022	137
2021	165
2019	193
2018	177
2017	168
2016	146
2015	117
2014	92



*Fiorito Brothers, Blankets of Hope  
2022 Annual Breakfast*



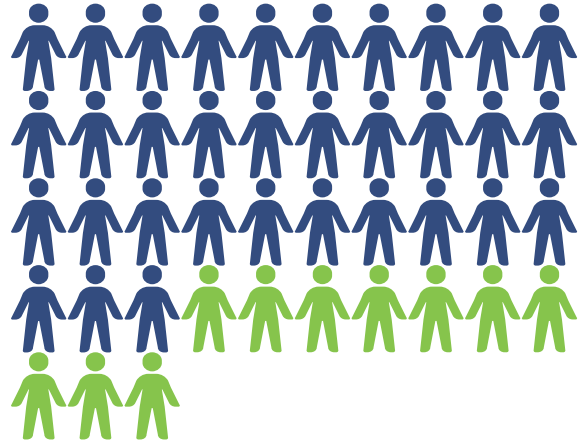
**SAVE THE DATE!**  
2023 Annual Breakfast:  
**December 8, 2023**

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT: KEY ACTIVITIES- BAYS AND BAYOUS 2023



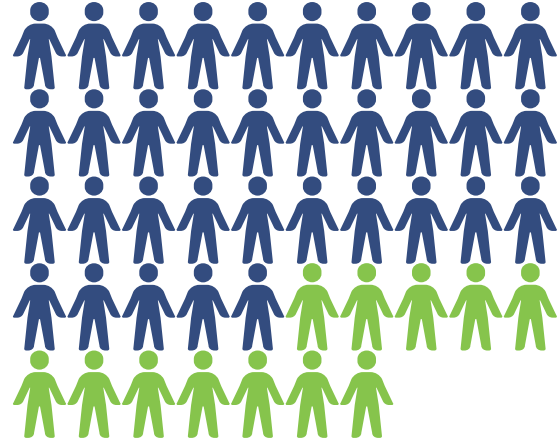
## Attendance

2018



Total 433  
Students 101

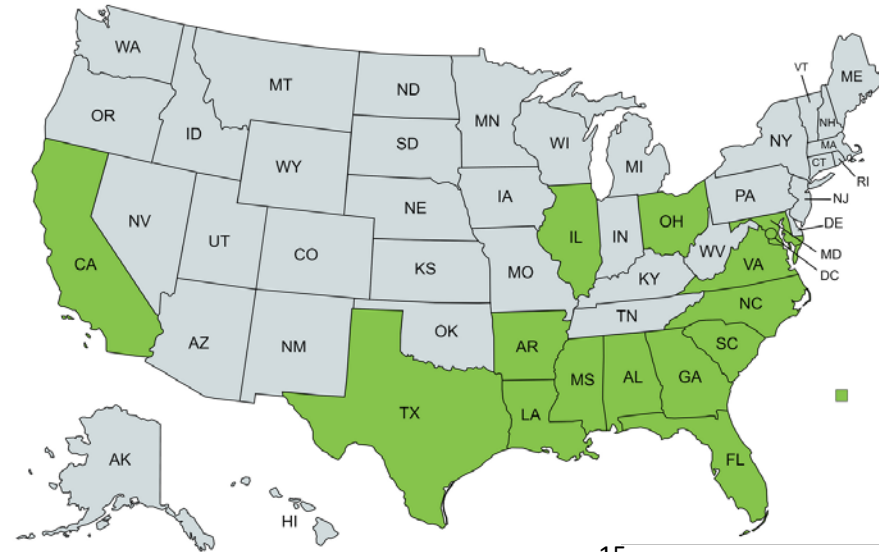
2022



Total 465  
Students 118

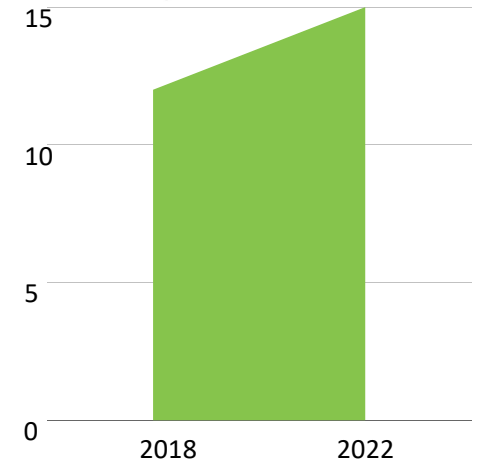
**Total 7.4% increase**  
**Students 16.8% increase**

## States Represented



Credited with mapsofusa.net

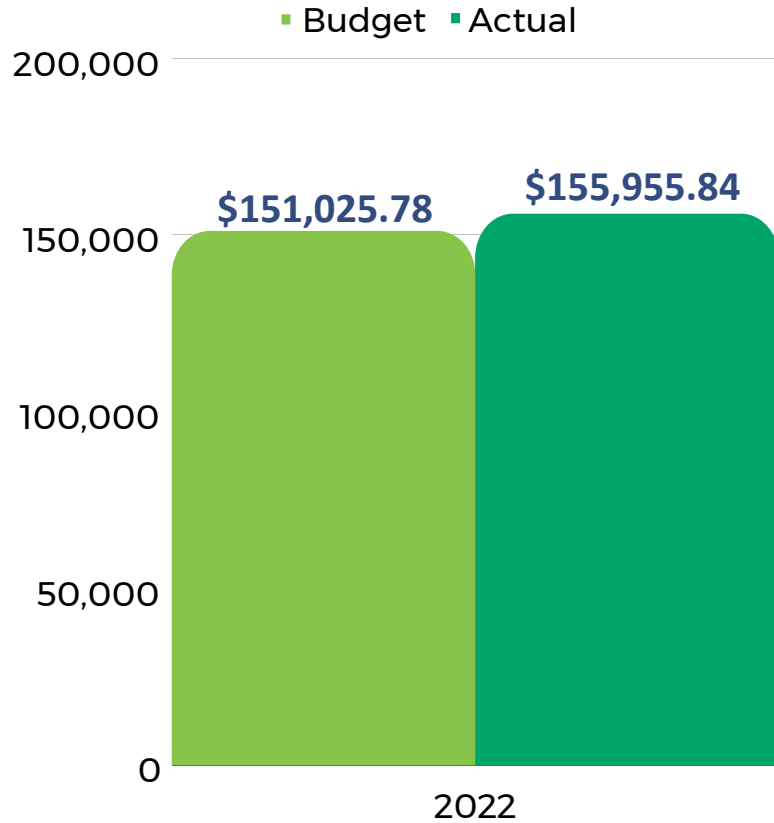
**25% increase**



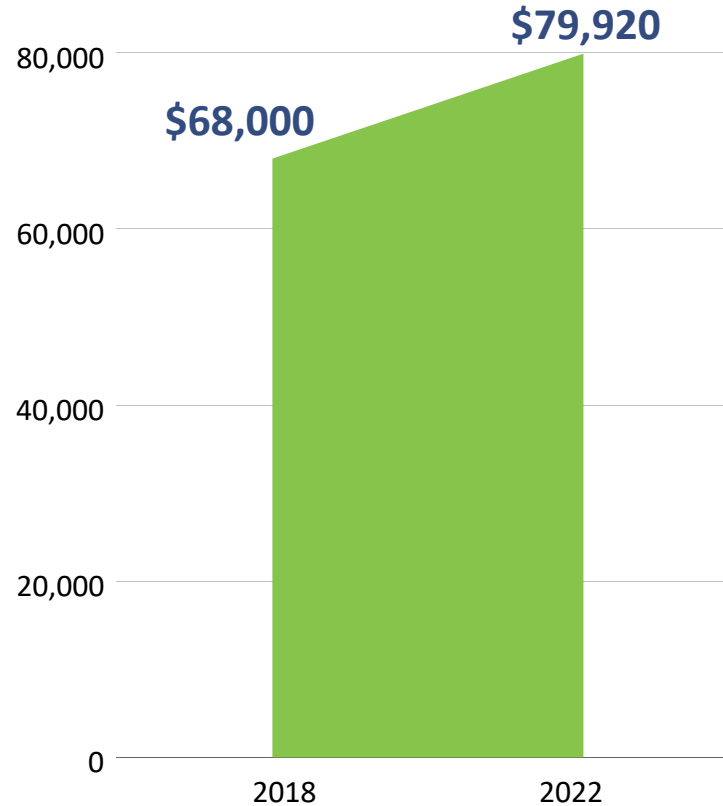
# DIRECTOR'S REPORT: KEY ACTIVITIES- BAYS AND BAYOUS 2023



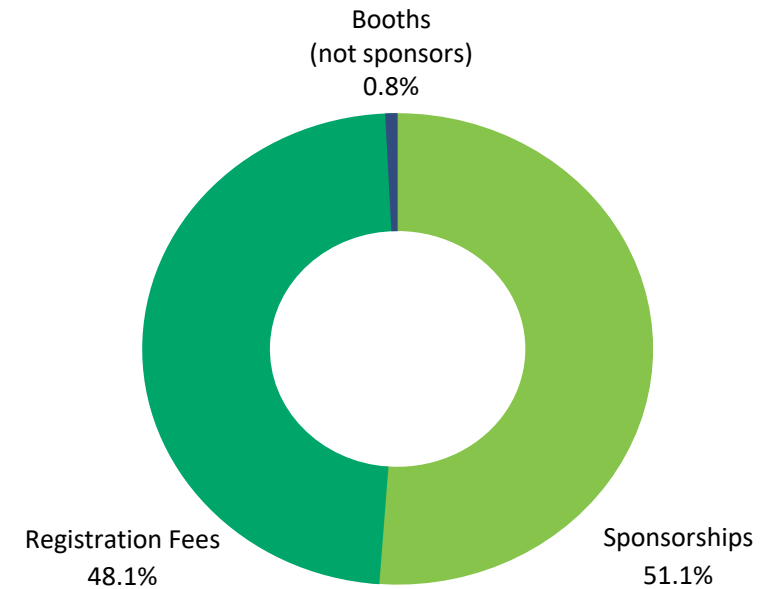
## Budget



## Sponsorships



## Breakdown



# DIRECTOR'S REPORT: KEY ACTIVITIES- NEW GRANTS



## Awarded

- NFWF- Coastal Resilience Fund Western Shoreline Management Plan ..... **\$575,000**
- NFWF- GEBF- Lower Fish River Watershed Restoration Phase II ..... **\$9,002,959**
- ADCNR ACAMP- Eight Mile Creek Watershed Planning ..... **\$30,000**

## Not Awarded

- NFWF-ATB Comprehensive Watershed Restoration Wolf Bay ..... **\$4,469,372**
- NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration- Perdido Watershed Restoration ..... ***Not invited for full proposal***

# DIRECTOR'S EVALUATION: STATUS REPORT



Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Director Evaluation Status As of March 31, 2023		
#	Action	Status
1	The EC Co-chairs form an ad hoc committee that can review and improve the current MBNEP Director's evaluation process. PC Comment	EC Co-Chairs Action
2	In the future the ECCC appoint representative Executive Committee Chairs in time (e.g., Spring-early Summer) to prepare for the next annual review. PC Comment.	EC Co-Chairs Action
3	Annual committee surveys be conducted within each committee to determine needs, challenges, and focus for the respective committees. This should be developed by the NEP staff in consultation with the future PC members. Results should be provided to the PC and the MBNEP Executive Director in a timely manner such that they can be used during the annual review of the MBNEP Executive Director and their review of the proposed Program Manager. PC Comment	This is currently done one-on-one with each set of committee co-chairs. It is the Director's responsibility to review MBNEP Staff.
4	Alternatively direct the DISL Executive Director to select members of the Executive Committee to participate in the MBNEP Executive Director's Annual Review.	NA
5	Reaffirm the MBNEP's engagement with the scientists, and the importance of the SAC in developing the new MBNEP CCMP. The MBNEP Director should clarify the future goals and objectives for the SAC with active participation by SAC members in the process prior to launching the CCMP listening sessions.	Stressor Evaluation in draft format; this evaluation, conducted with participation of the SAC, guides CCMP development
6	Develop greater transparency during the development and selection of competitive MBNEP awards. This will help resolve perceptions of preferential selection raised during the surveys.	A process is currently being followed which provides transparency, including open competition, a selection committee who reviews proposals and conducts interviews (the Director does not participate in contractor selection) and debriefing of non-awardees.
7	Conflicts of Interest should be identified and addressed early in award processes, including clear paths between MBNEP and DISL financial reviews and approvals and voting on the EC priorities.	?
8	Improve MBNEP collaborations with other NEPs in adjoining coastal states to maximize project and program impacts on the environment.	MBNEP does collaborate with other Gulf NEPs (Tampa) and currently with Casco Bay NEP on projects of mutual interest. Historically MBNEP has led collaborations with Coastal Bay and Bends, Barrateria Terrebone, and Tampa NEPs. MBNEP will work with other NGOs
9	Implement the proposed office management plan to maximize staff organization and development	In progress.
10	A revision of the MOU between MBNEP and DISL and the associated Bylaws should be completed through a multi-party and transparent process that includes the sponsoring entity (DISL), Mobile Bay NEP Executive Director, and 2 members, appointed by the ECCCs, of the Executive Committee. This will include clarification on the responsibilities, liabilities, and employee policies of the DISL and other entities such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Alabama Department of Natural Resources (conference co-chairs) regarding the review and management of the NEP director.	The MOU process between ADCNR, MBNEP, and DISL begins with MBNEP working with ADCNR to review/re negotiate terms; MBNEP prepares a draft which is shared with both ADCNR and DISL. MBNEP convenes all parties to vet terms of MOU, make any agreed upon changes, and prepares document for final signatures.
11	DISL Executive Director sign off on all personnel reviews for NEP staff?	All personnel reviews of NEP staff are submitted to the DISL Human Resources Department, per DISL policy.



# NEW BUSINESS: ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT-PART 1

## NEPs: The Federal Perspective

The Law: The Clean Water Act (amended, 1987)

*The National Estuary Program was created by the U.S. Congress in 1987 through amendments to the Clean Water Act, with the goal to "identify, restore, and protect nationally significant estuaries in the United States."*

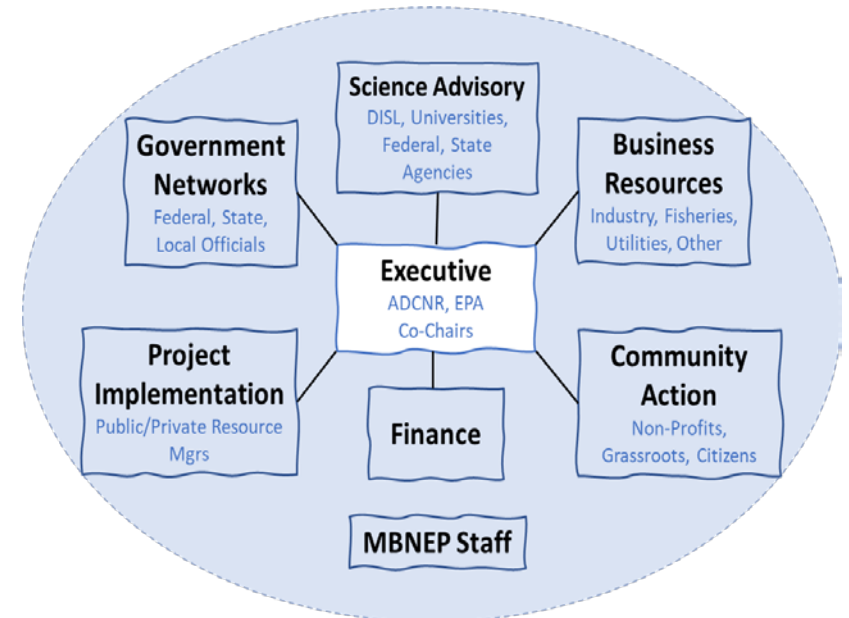




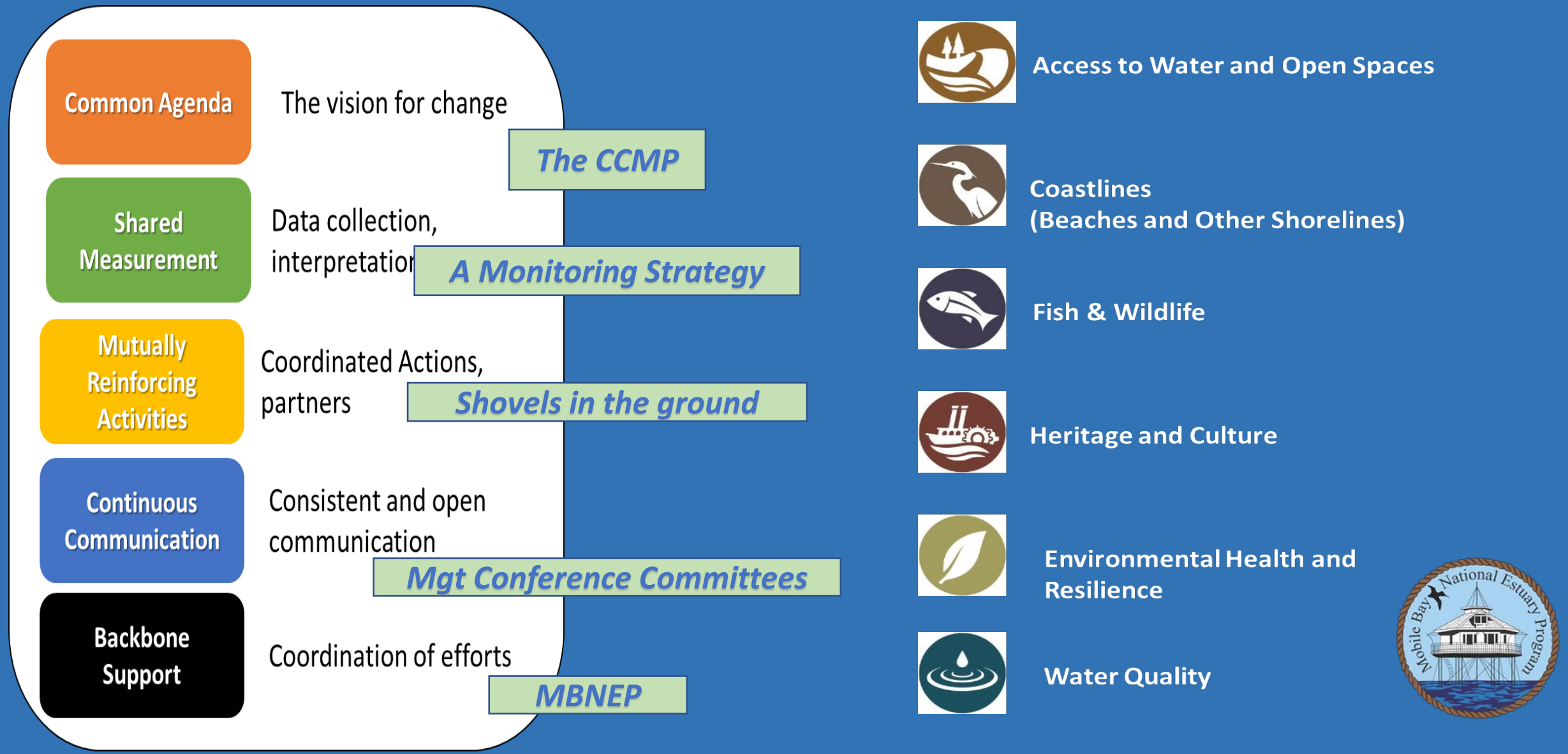
## Section 320 of the Clean Water Act: NEPS will

- Assess trends
- Identify causes
- Develop relationships
- Develop collective plan
- Coordinate collective implementation
- Monitor effectiveness
- Provide consistency reviews

- Champion protection and restoration efforts through **cultivation of partnerships**
- Lead watershed protection by **coordinating collective actions** to measurably improve water quality, habitat management and living resource management
- Establish a **community of committed** environmental stewards



# MBNEP: How we achieve Collective Impact, Why?



# The Road Ahead

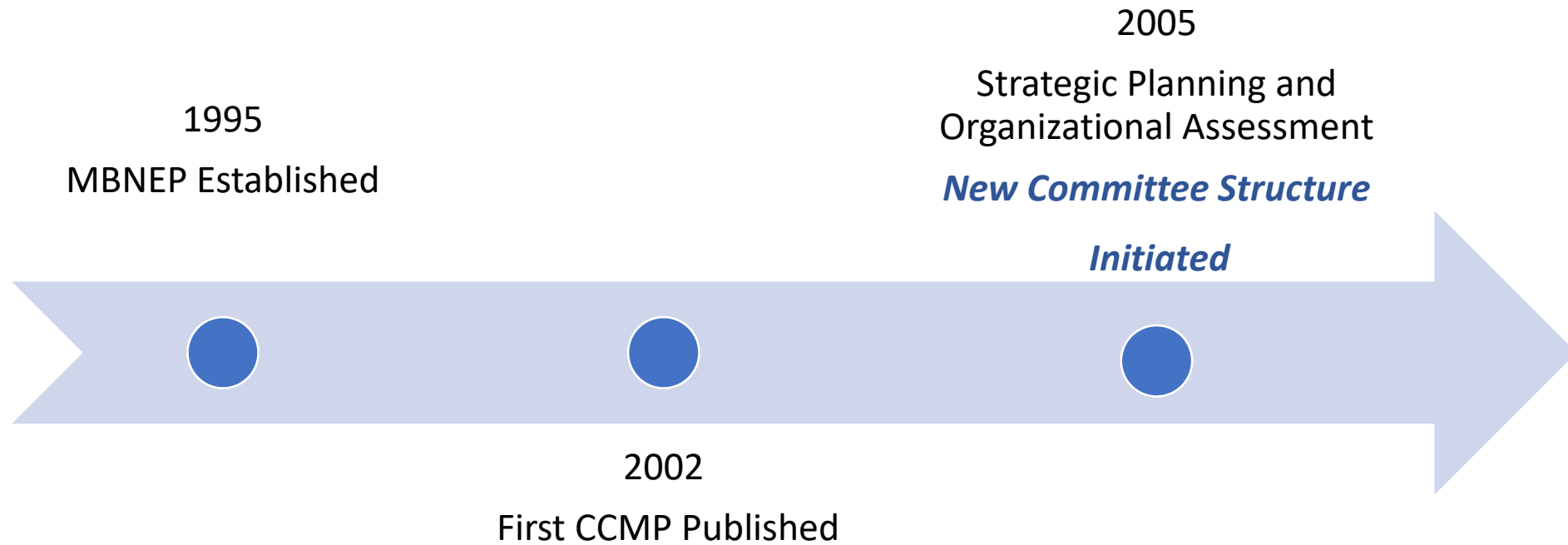
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>2023</b>	March 31	Watershed Assessment
	May 31	CCMP Evaluation
	June 30	Stressor Evaluation Technical Report
	December 31	Community Outreach Phase One
<b>2024</b>	January 31	MC Organizational Assessment
	March 31	State of Alabama's Estuaries and Coast
	December 31	Outreach Phase Two
<b>2025</b>	June 30	CCMP Re-Write: Strategy Development
	August 31	CCMP Out for Public Comment
	September 30	CCMP Finalization and Approvals
	October 1	Begin Implementation

# Introduction of Mary

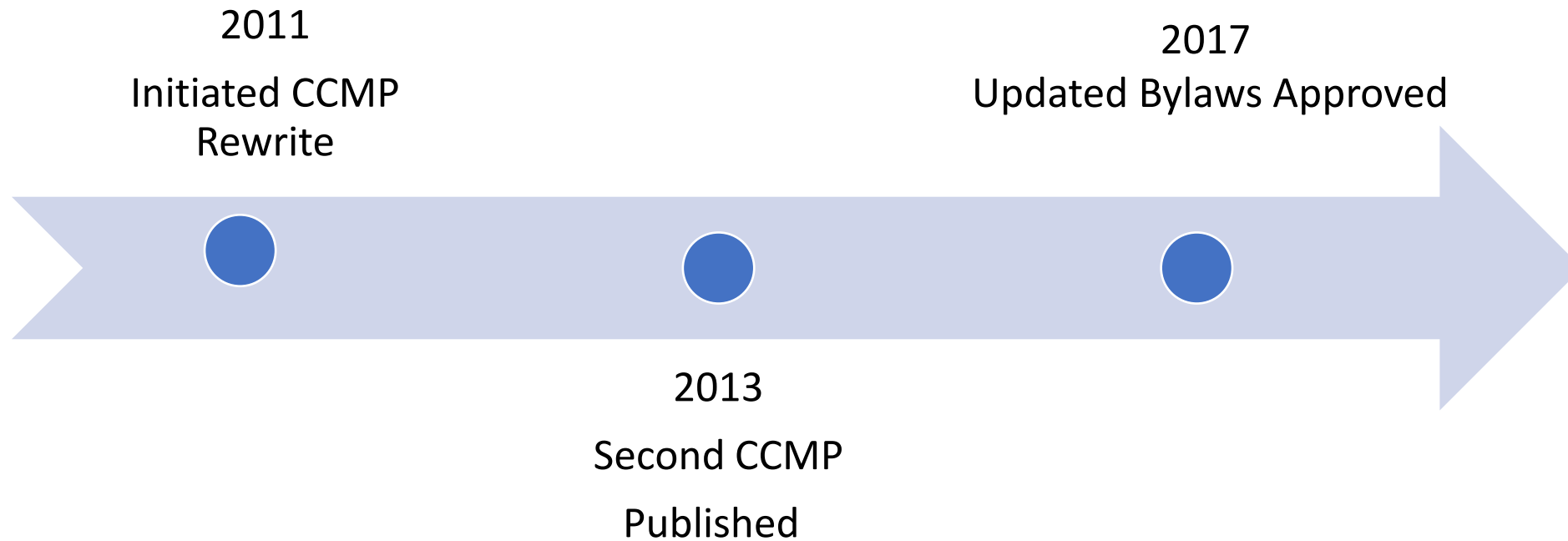
**IMPACT**

Mullins Public Affairs Consulting

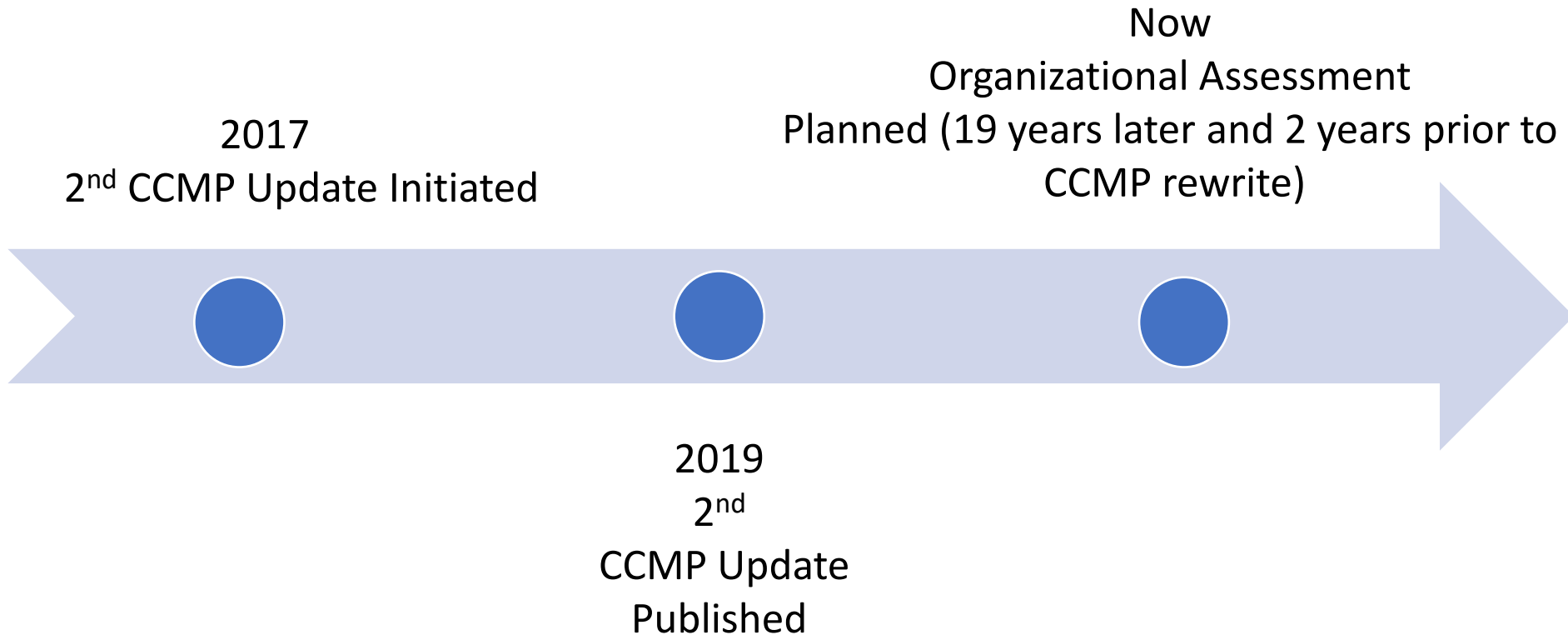
# The Road Behind



# The Road Behind



# The Road Behind



# MBNEP: Unique Among Environmental Organizations

## MBNEP **IS**:

- **Science-based**
- **A partnership organization**, lifting, promoting and complementing the work of our partner organizations
- **Funded** by US EPA, State of Alabama, Local Counties and Municipalities
- A **multi-sector “conference”** of leaders
- Guided by a Management Conference created **Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan**

## MBNEP **IS NOT**:

- An **activist** organization
- An individual organization **setting its own environmental priorities** at the risk of others or our environment
- Funded by **membership and donors**
- Led by **a single director** with a Board of Directors
- Focused on the **short-term environmental issues** of the day



# The Road to an Improved Organizational Structure

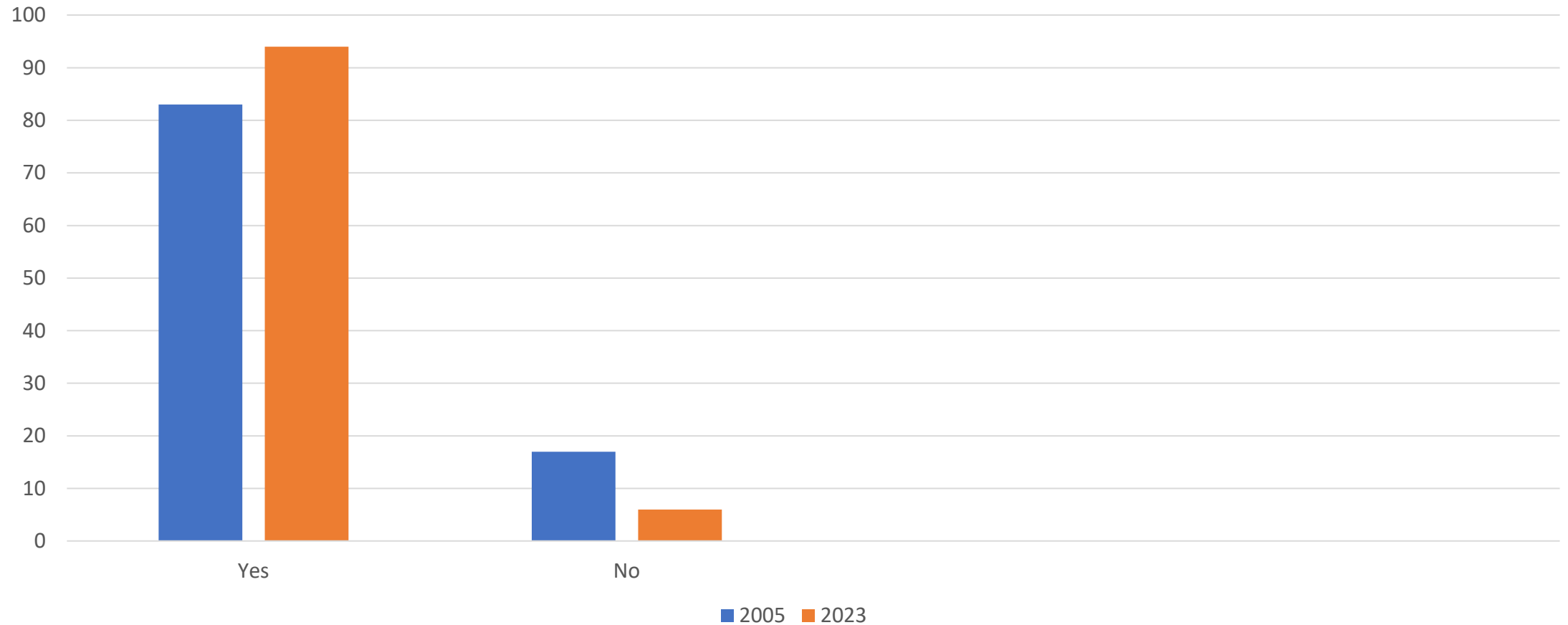
<b><i>Part One</i></b>	Executive Committee Evaluation/Input
<b><i>Part Two</i></b>	Management Conference/Key Stakeholders Evaluation/Input
<b><i>Part Three</i></b>	Assessment of Input gathered; Recommended Changes to Structure; EC Approval
<b><i>Part Four</i></b>	Bylaws Updates to reflect Changes; Improve Operation



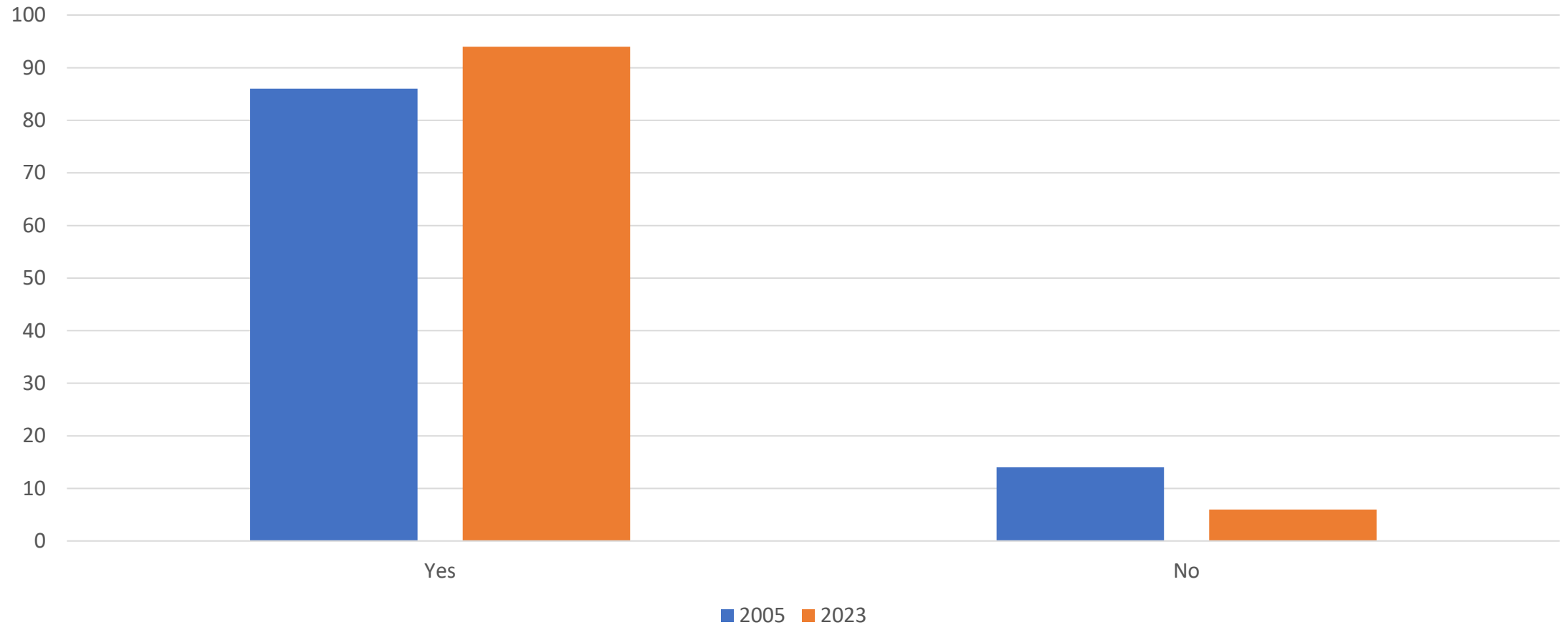
# IMPACT

Mullins Public Affairs Consulting

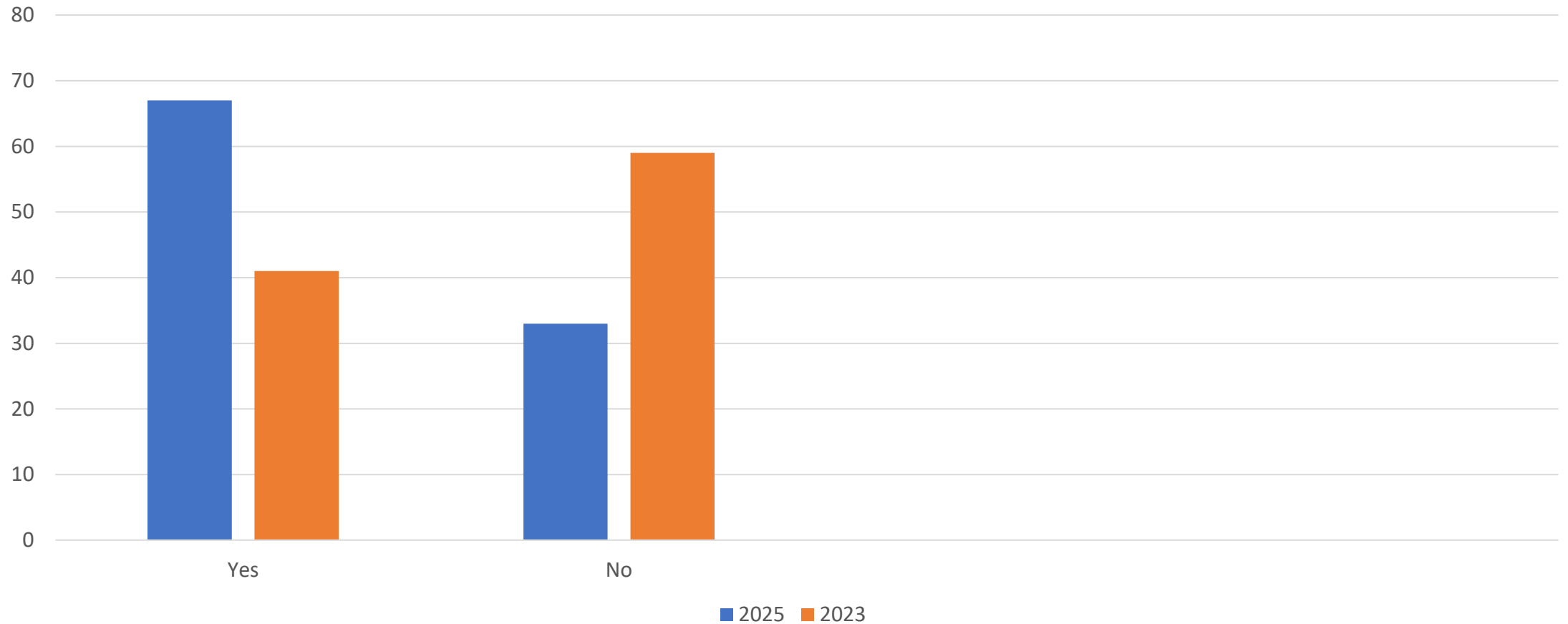
# In your opinion, has the MBNEP been successful in their role?



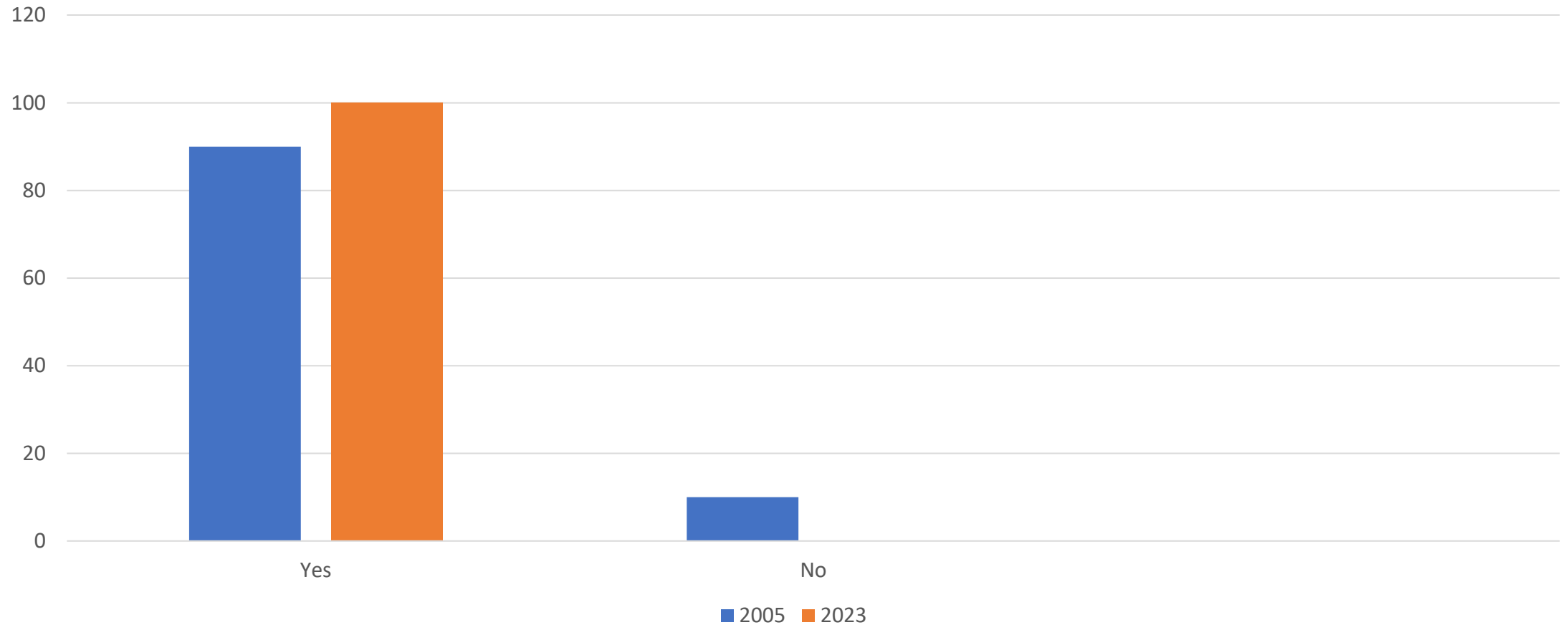
# Do you attend Management Conference meetings on a regular basis?



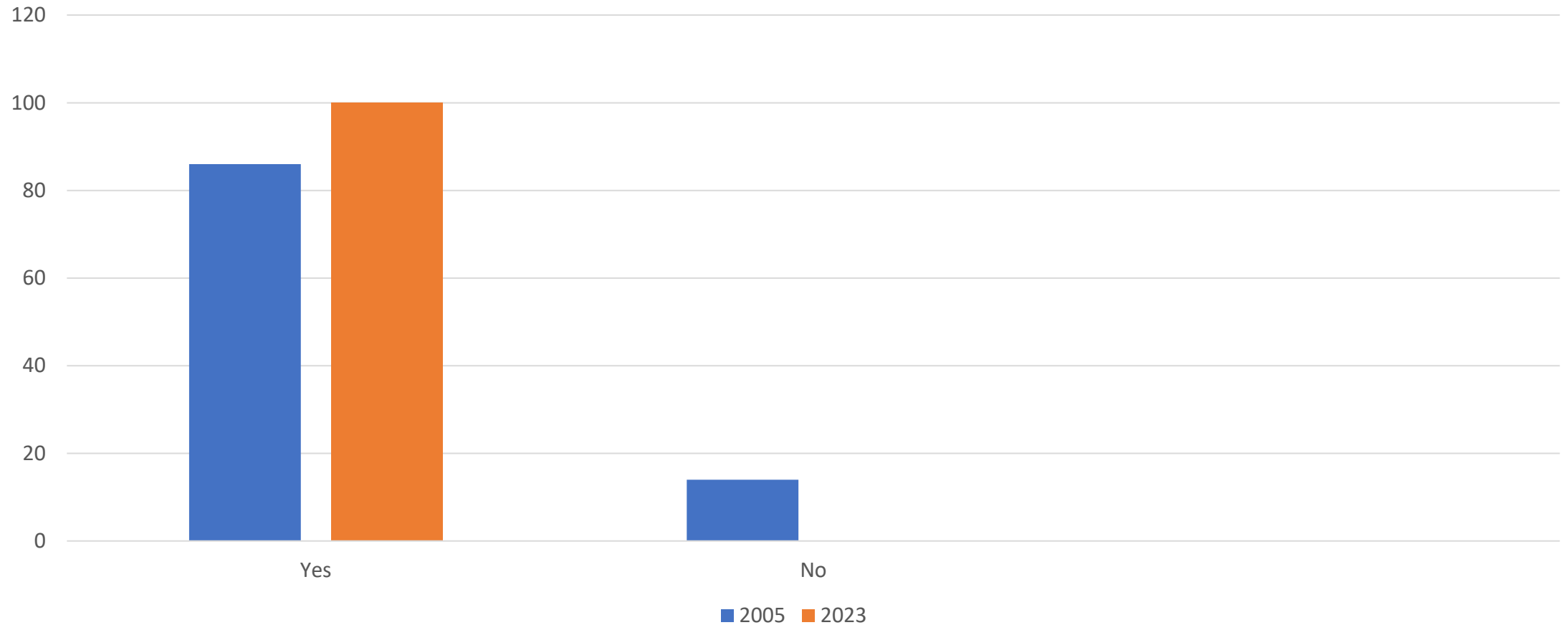
# Does the Management Conference represent the broad diversity of stakeholders within the community?



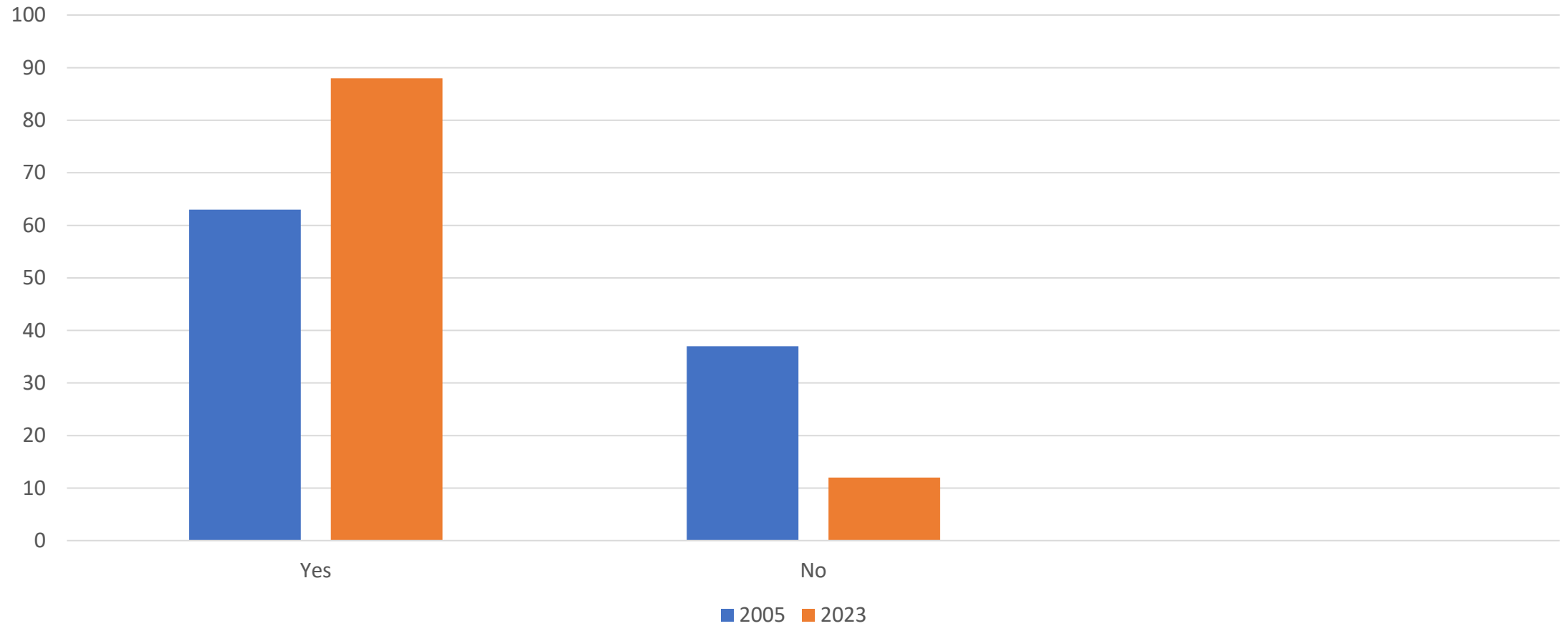
# Is the MBNEP credible with regulatory and government agencies?



# Is the MBNEP credible with environmental groups?

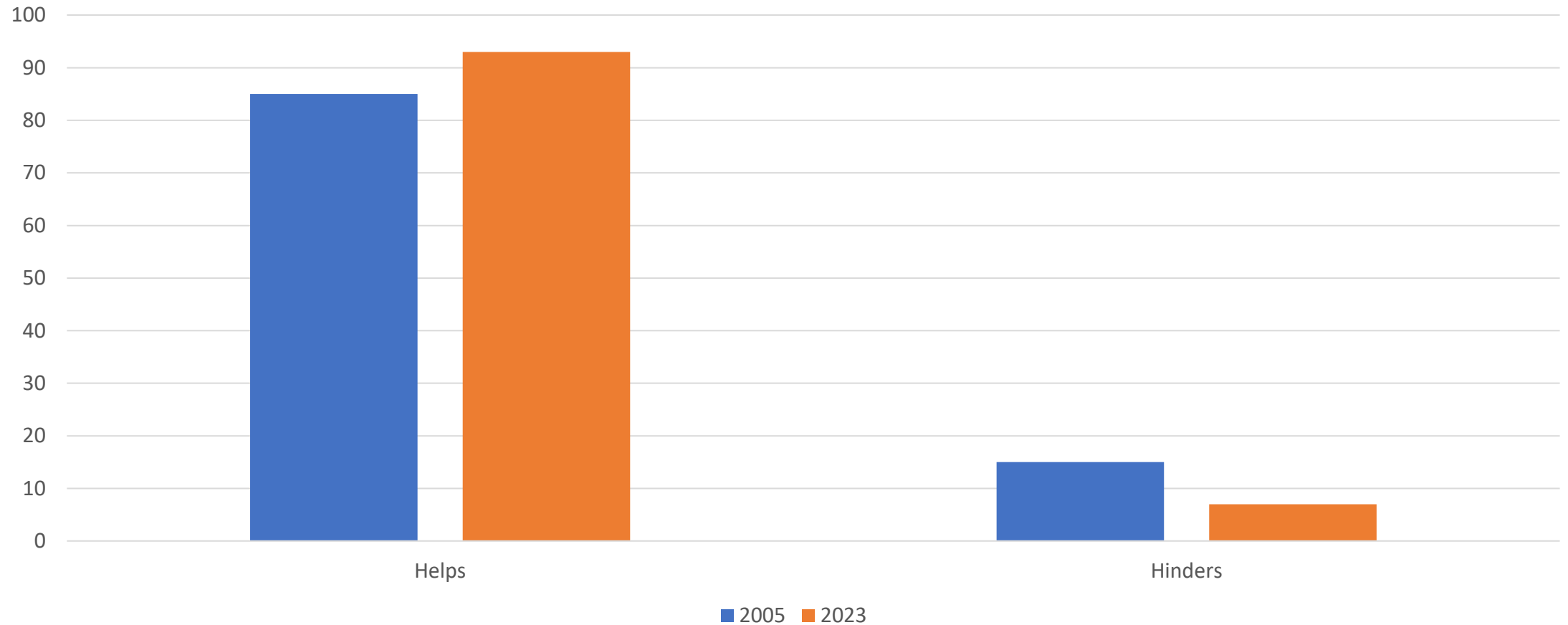


# Is the MBNEP credible with the public?

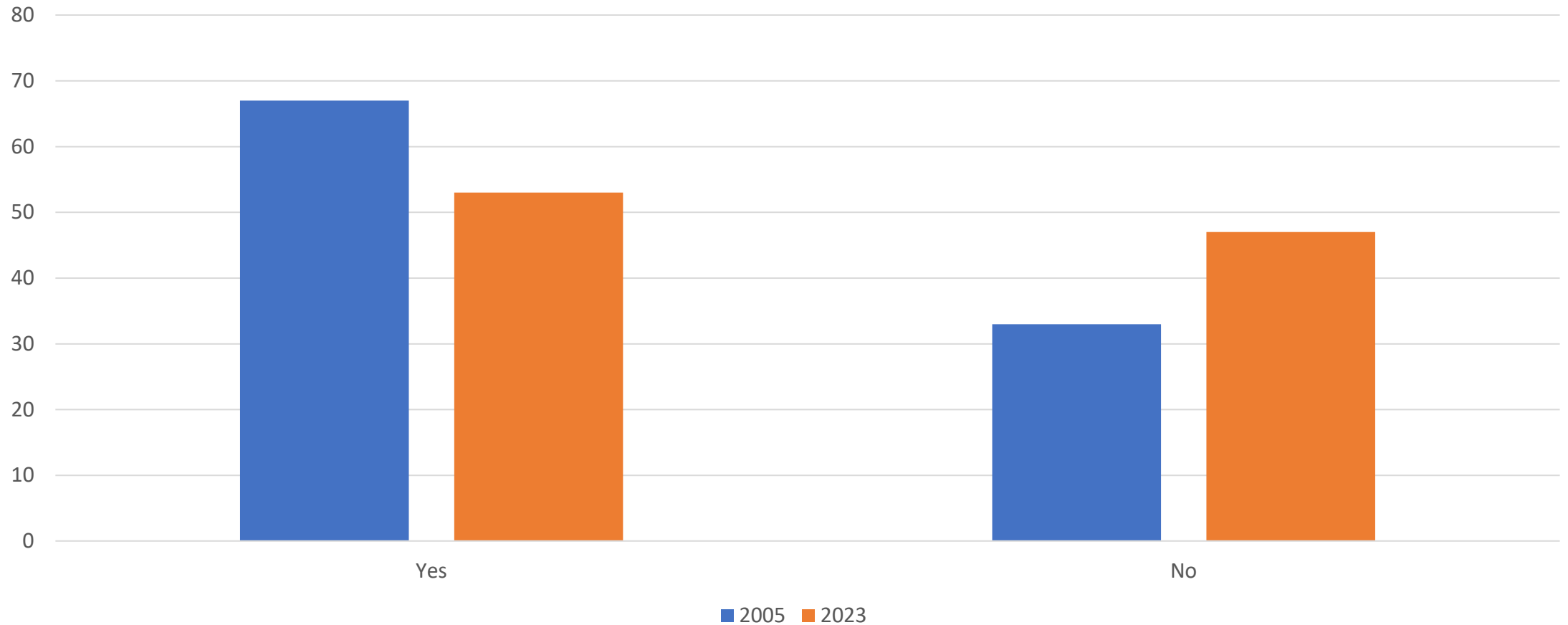




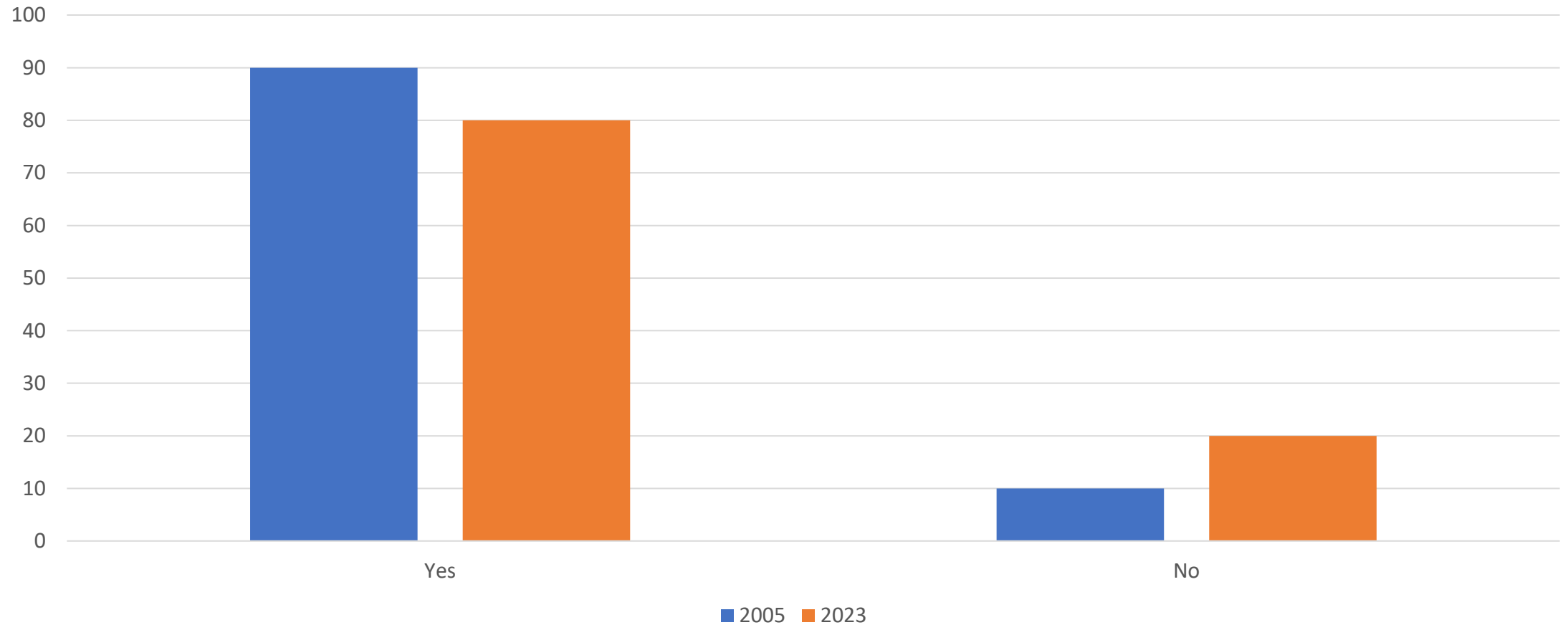
# Does working with the MBNEP on projects help or hinder project success?



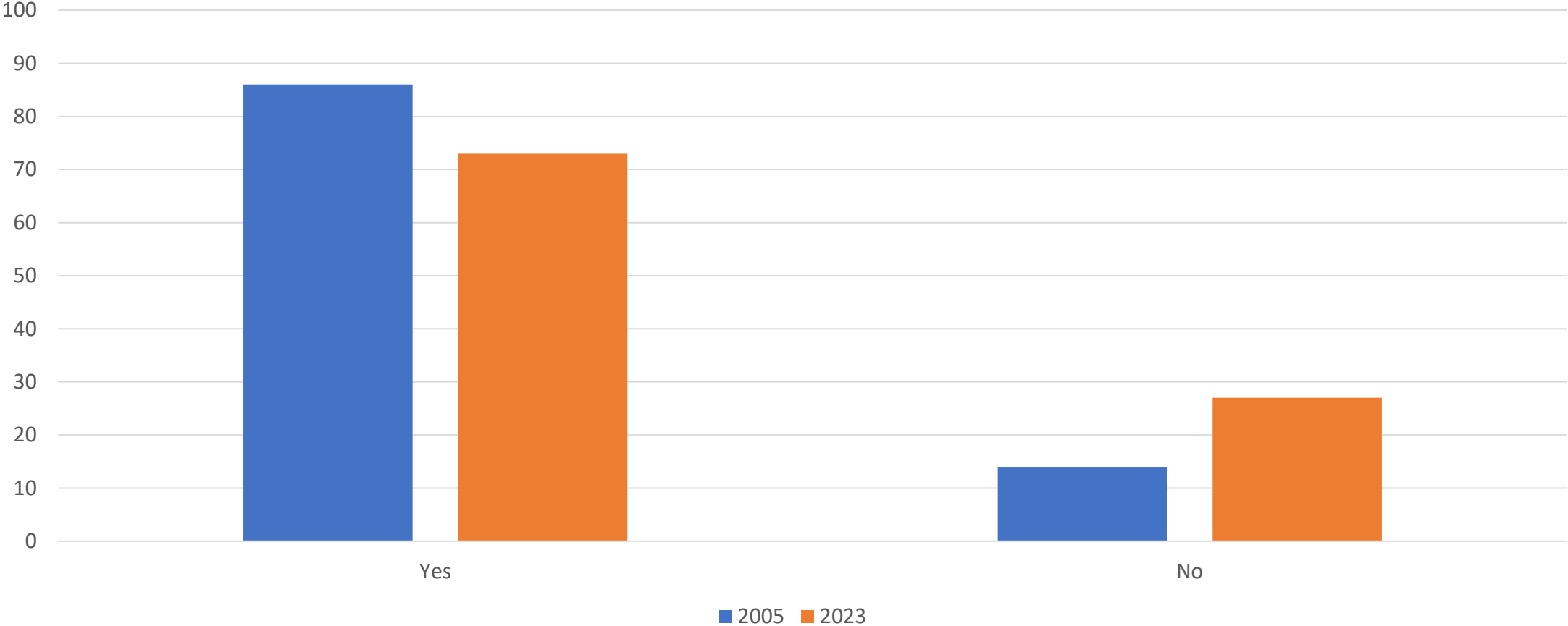
# Does the MBNEP give your organization sufficient support to educate the Management Conference and public about your contributions?



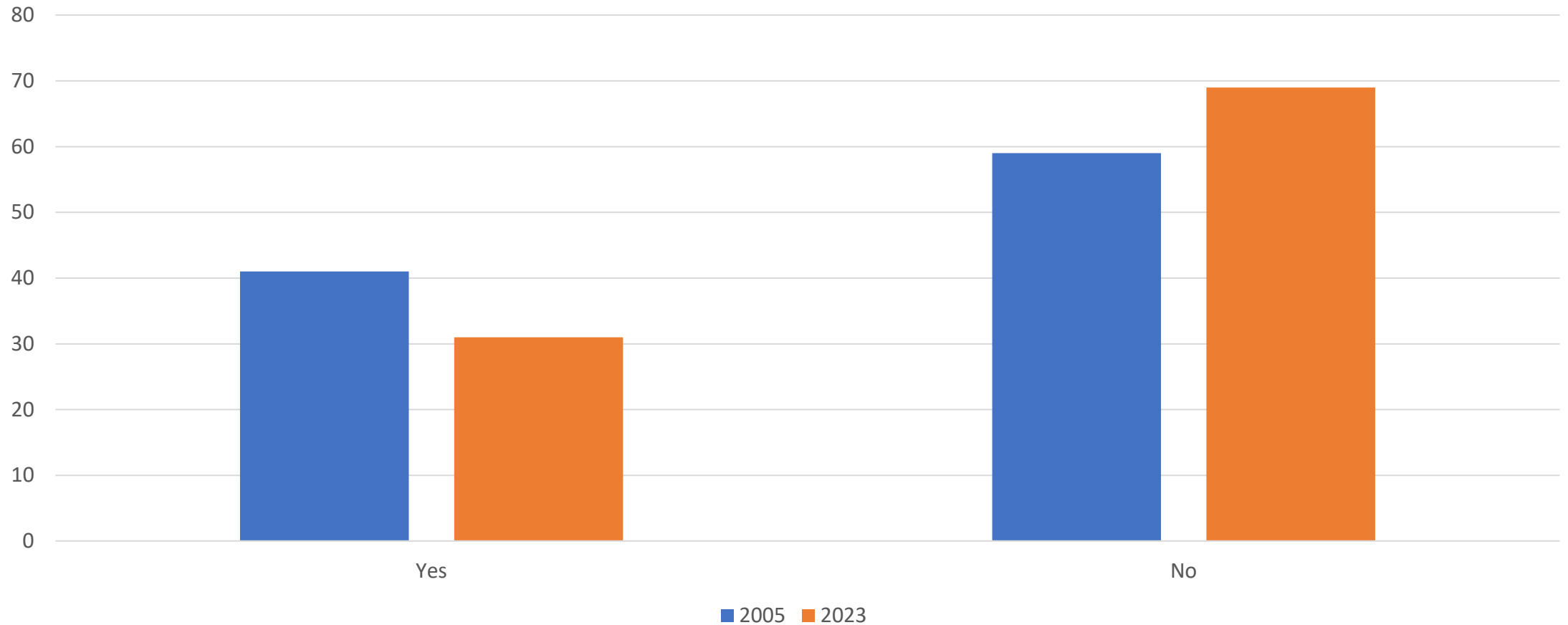
# Does the MBNEP give your organization sufficient networking opportunities?



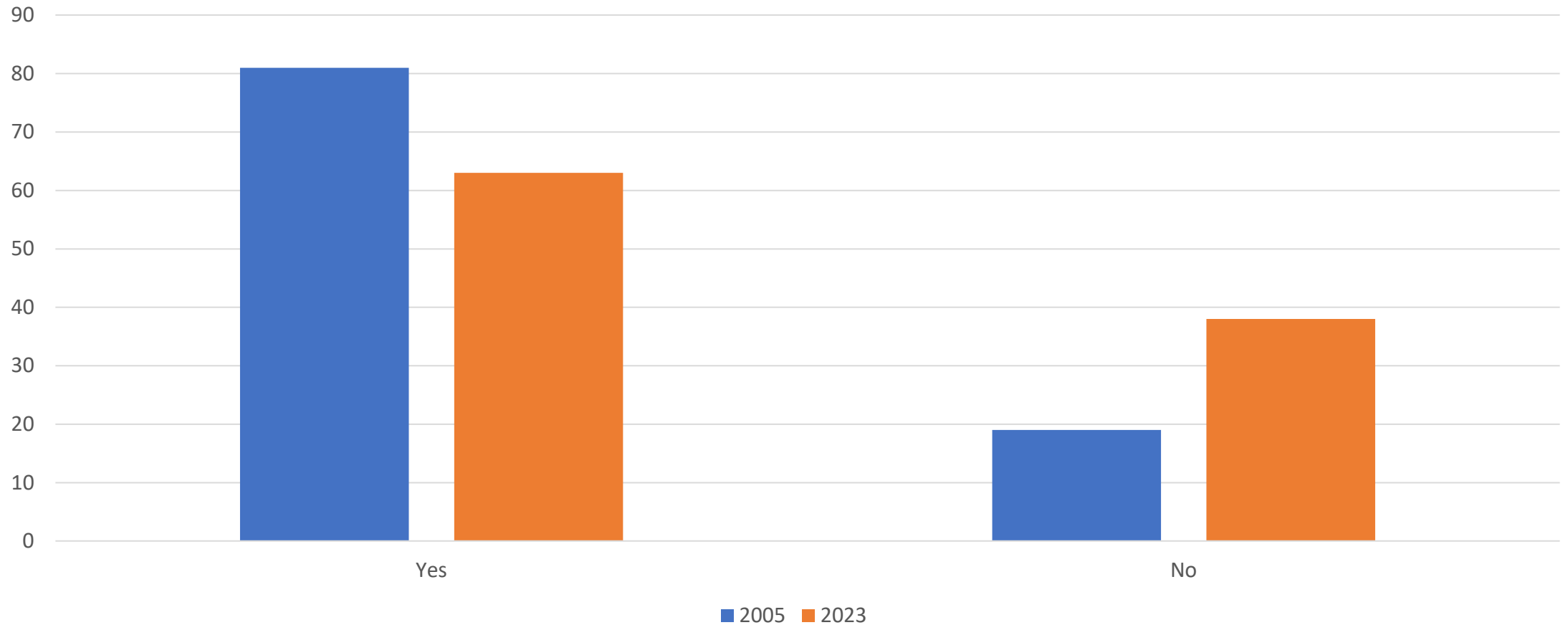
# Are you familiar with the strategies in the CCMP?



# Does the MBNEP adequately communicate successful implementation of the CCMP?



# Does the MBNEP do a good job of sharing credit for CCMP successes with its partners?





## Q&A

- What additional questions should we be asking?
- What are the best ways to push out the survey to your committees to ensure maximum participation?
- Who are some key stakeholders outside the Management Conference we should be polling?

- OTHER
- ANNOUNCEMENTS
- ADJOURN



**Happy Birthday Bethany!**