

Cowichan Watershed Board

Governance - Next Steps



November 2015

Today – Discuss and Confirm

- Current situation and opportunities for CWB governance
- Approach for moving forward
- Key Elements in a Governance Pilot Proposal to the Province

Current Situation

- CWB has strengthened the basin plan, established meaningful targets and supported actions to address critical issues
- Community partnerships, knowledge and support for water stewardship continue to grow

Current Situation

BUT

- CWB members unanimously rated current water management re critical issues as poor.
- Basin plan needs refinement and possible inclusion of Koksilah to better address critical issues.

Progress is stalling without more local authority & resources to act

The Opportunity

The new **Water Sustainability Act** enables:

- Groundwater licensing
- Formal protection of environmental flows and critical flows
- Enhanced monitoring and planning
- Improved integration of water objectives in land use decisions
- **Local shared and delegated decision making**

The regulations detailing how this will work are under development & will be phased in over the next two years.

The Opportunity

CWB demonstrates many “winning conditions” for assuming decision making authority:

- First Nations co-governance with local government
- Leadership and cohesiveness
- Whole watershed thinking
- Local stewardship networking and learning
- Growing foundation of technical information
- Local readiness to assume shared risks and responsibilities

CWB is a ready made opportunity for the Province to test drive greater local authority

Local Authority – How Much?

CWB Members surveyed re degree of local authority desired for:

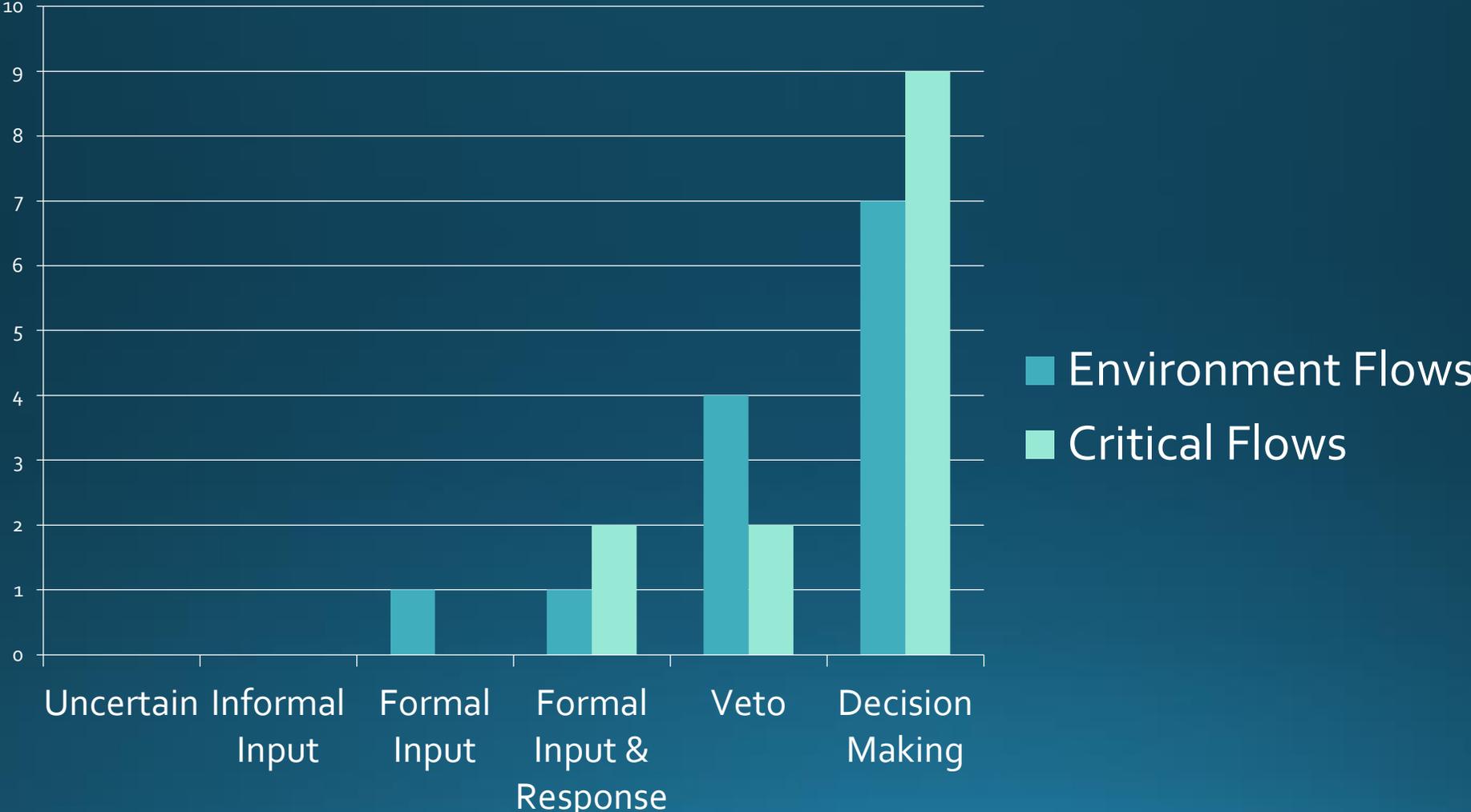
- Water licensing – surface and ground
- Environmental & critical flows
- Planning – Drought; Water sustainability plans; Drinking water source protection; Water objectives
- Dam and Dyke safety
- Riparian – RAR; protected stream designations
- Compliance and enforcement re water licenses; riparian; water quality
- Monitoring & reporting re water use, state of watershed; water quality objectives
- Other watershed resources – e.g., forestry, mining, agriculture, parks etc.

Local Authority – How Much?

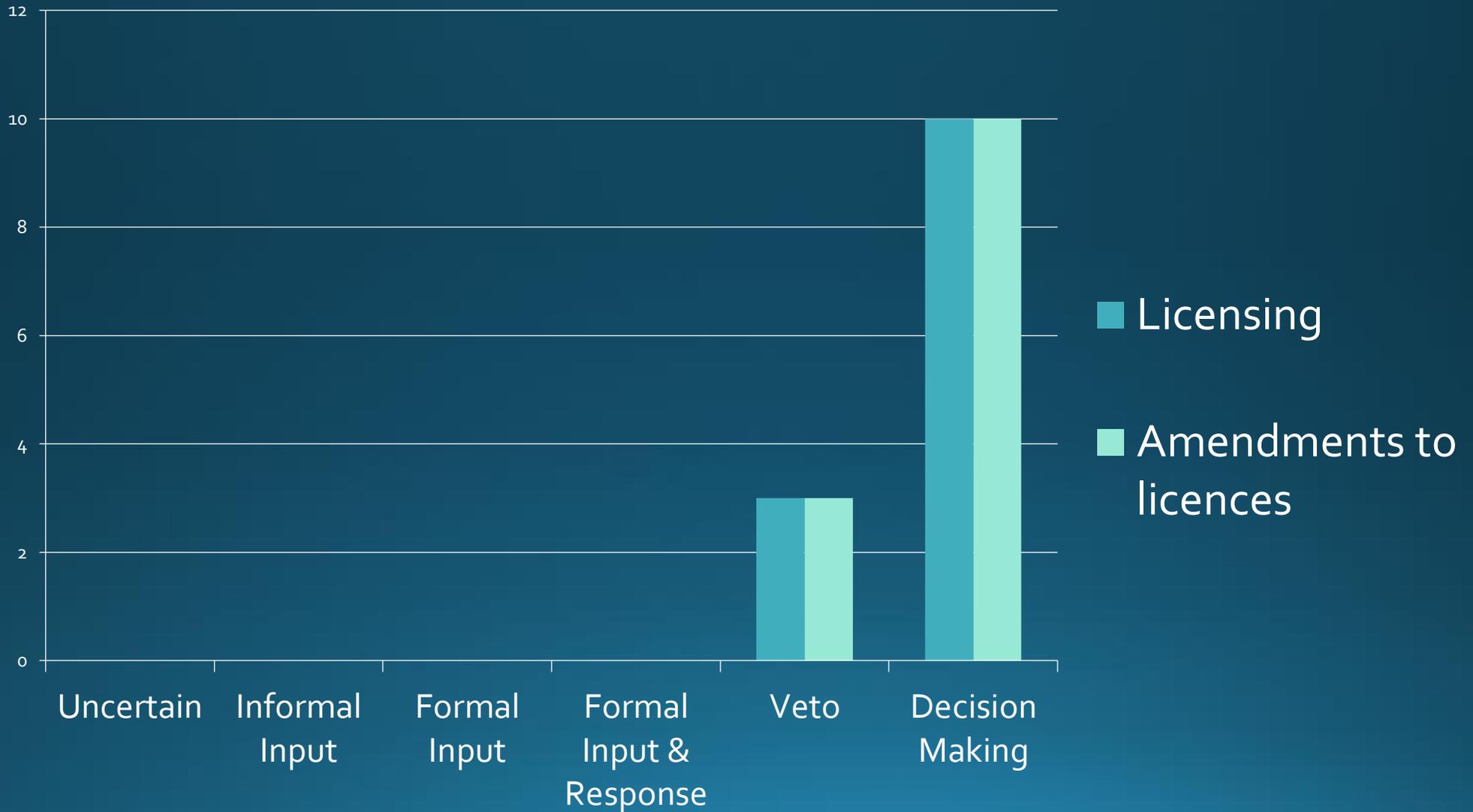
Results:

- High degree of consistency among members
- Desire for strong authority i.e., formal consideration or decision veto or full decision-making
- For example.....

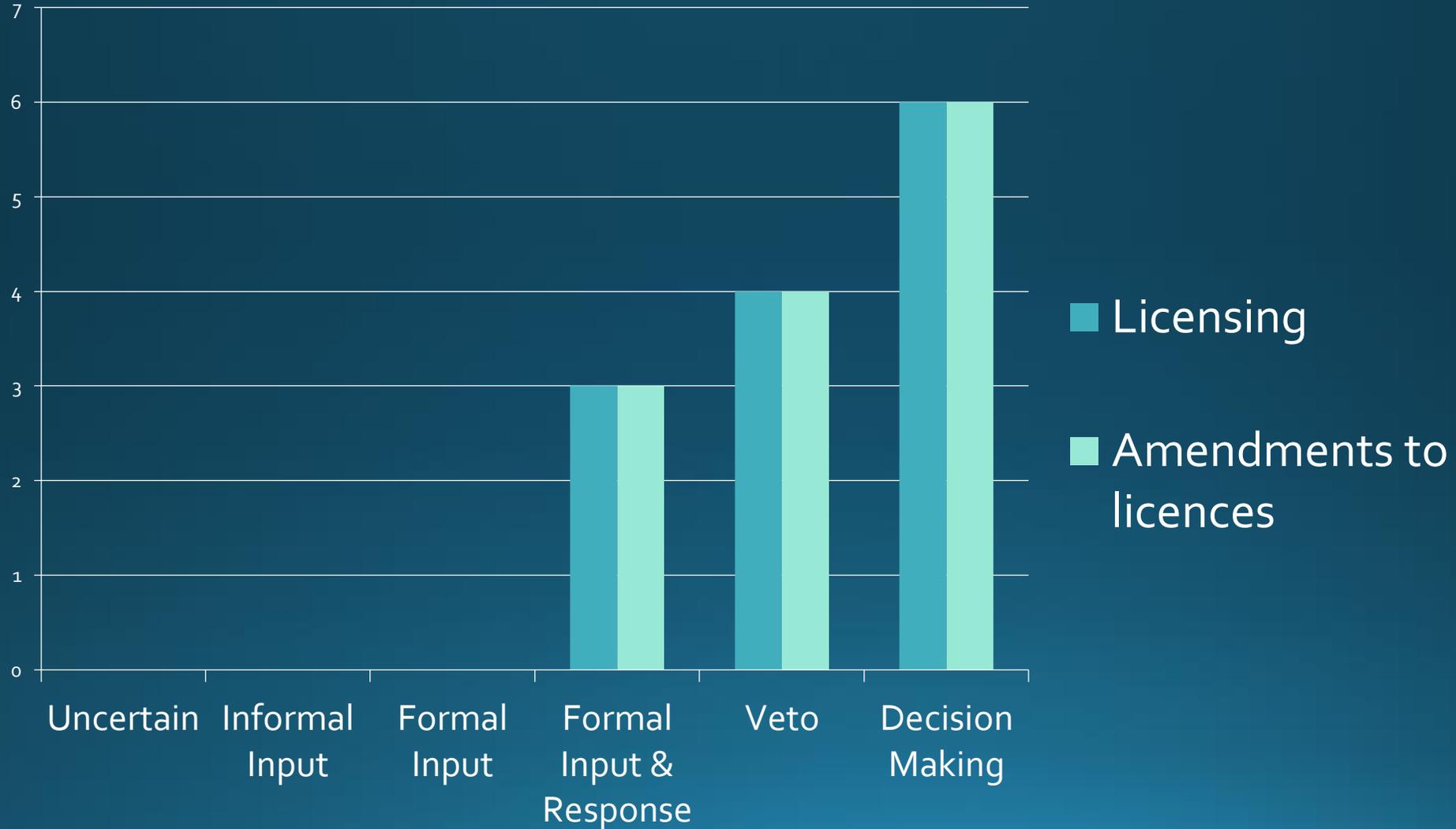
Degree of Desired Authority Flows



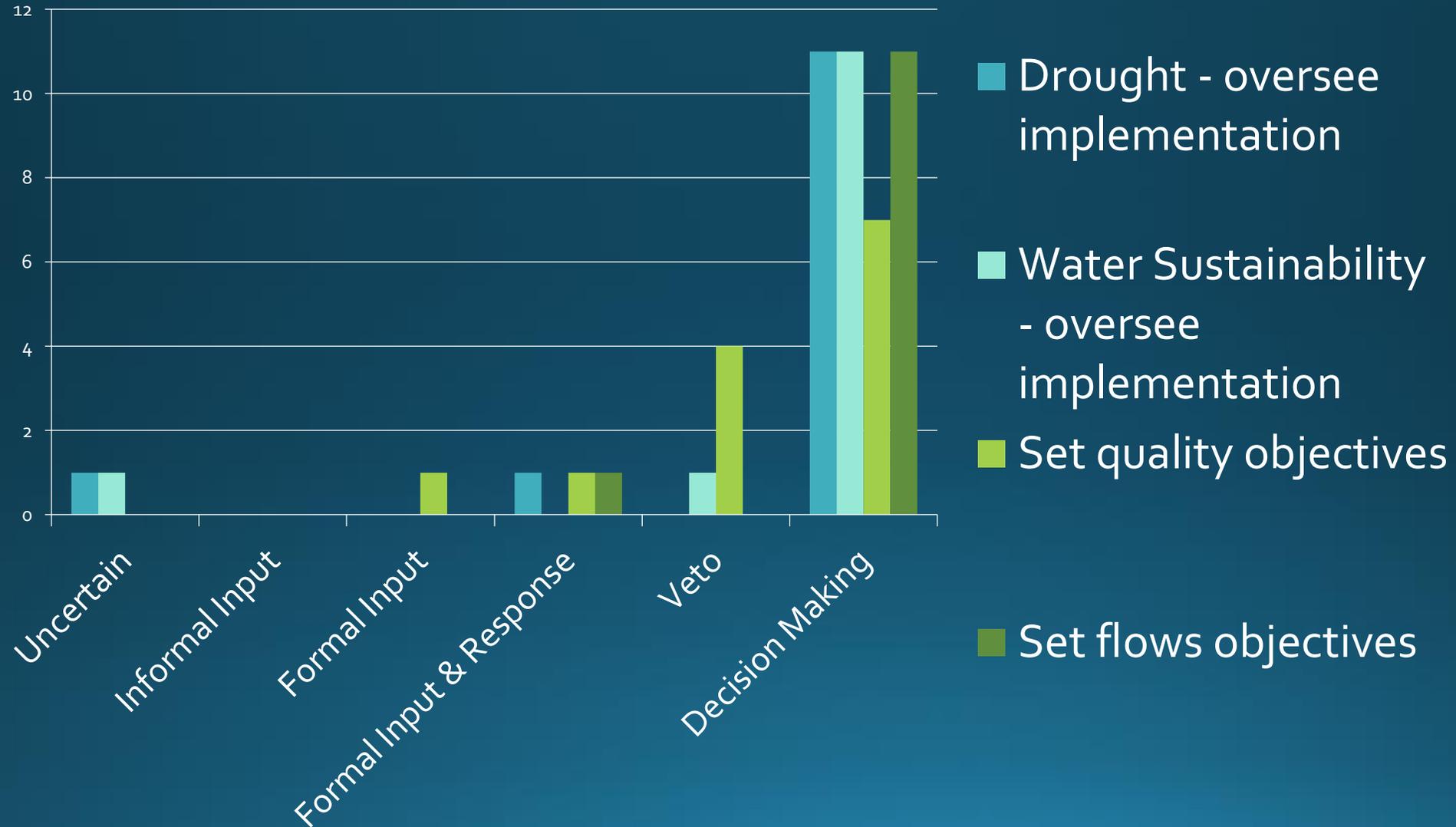
Degree of Desired Authority Surface Water



Degree of Desired Authority Ground Water



Degree of Desired Authority Planning



Local Authority – How to Get There?

Recommend phased approach – small steps; focus on priority needs, achievability and affordability; build on success over time.

- **Phase one– Pilot Governance Proposal**
 - Enhance CWB/CVRD/Tribes partnership and confirm common interests, leadership roles, and funding commitments
 - Initiate “State of Watershed” report
 - Initiate Water Sustainability Plan for Cowichan/Koksilah
- **Phase two– Prepare for Delegated Powers**
 - Review CWB capacity/structure for WSP implementation & delegated powers
 - Develop sustainable CWB funding model
 - Develop CWB strategic plan

Governance Pilot Proposal

Preparing for greater authority by:

1. Requesting the Province designate the CWB as a governance entity under s. 126 of WSA
2. Partnering with the Province on a State of the Watershed report for 2016 that pulls together existing information to support WSP
3. Requesting the Province to order a Water Sustainability Planning process with CWB and province to co-develop the legally enforceable plan

Water Sustainability Plan - Focus

1. Environmental Flows – legally enforceable flow thresholds for sustainable aquatic ecosystems/fisheries built on understanding of cumulative impacts of water use. CWB to be involved in setting targets and advising on allocations/licenses
2. Water Quality – CWB to be involved in setting objectives and monitoring and reporting
3. Protecting Habitats/Ecological Services – CWB to be involved in monitoring and reporting re protection and overseeing CEEMP Steering Committee (estuary plan)

Governance Pilot Proposal Outline

1. Purpose of Proposal – how governance reform will fix watershed issues
2. Overview – descriptions of watershed and CWB
3. CWB priorities:
 1. State of Watershed Report
 2. CWB plan into a WSP legal plan
 3. CWB a governance entity under s.126
4. Priority 1 – State of Watershed Report – 2016 baseline
5. Priority 2 - Water Sustainability Plan
 - Developing the WSP
 - Implementing the WSP

Governance Pilot Proposal Outline

6. Priority 3 – CWB Governance Entity

- Influence decision-making
- Coordinate oversee WSP implementation
- Reinforce accountability through state of watershed reporting

7. Alignment with Cowichan Tribes and CVRD Initiatives

8. Resource Requirements

9. Risks and Benefits

Request:

- Approval of conceptual approach presented
- Approval to prepare Governance Pilot Proposal
 - Work with Technical Advisory Committee to prepare draft for CWB discussion - February 2016
 - Revised draft for review and discussion by CVRD and Cowichan Tribes - March-April 2016
 - Finalize proposal as basis for negotiations with province - May 2016