

TMDL TAG: Increasing the Effectiveness of Georgia's TMDL Program



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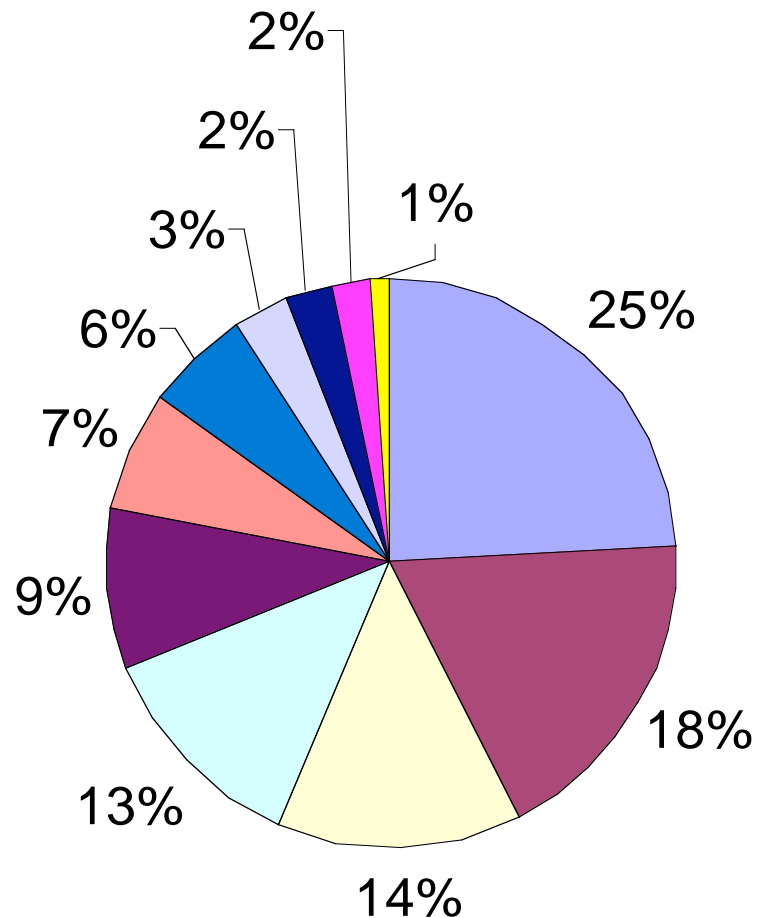
TMDL TAG Survey Background



- Despite progress, need for understanding as to how to overcome barriers that limit the effectiveness of the TMDL process.
- Survey: Nov. 2006 sent to ~ 200 stakeholders involved in Georgia's TMDL process
- 20 questions
- 85 respondents

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q1. Which Best Describes You?

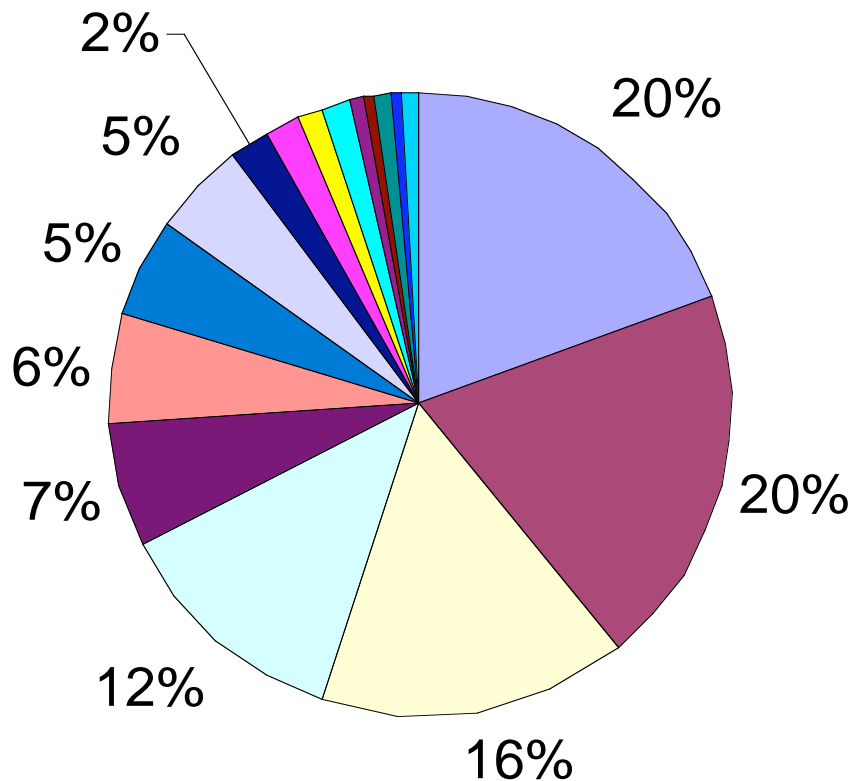


- Local Government
- Watershed/Non-profit Group
- Concerned Citizen
- Federal Government
- Consultant/private Industry
- Educator
- Regional Development Center
- Water/Wastewater Authority
- Skipped
- State Government
- Other

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q2. What is the Most Urgent TMDL Issue?

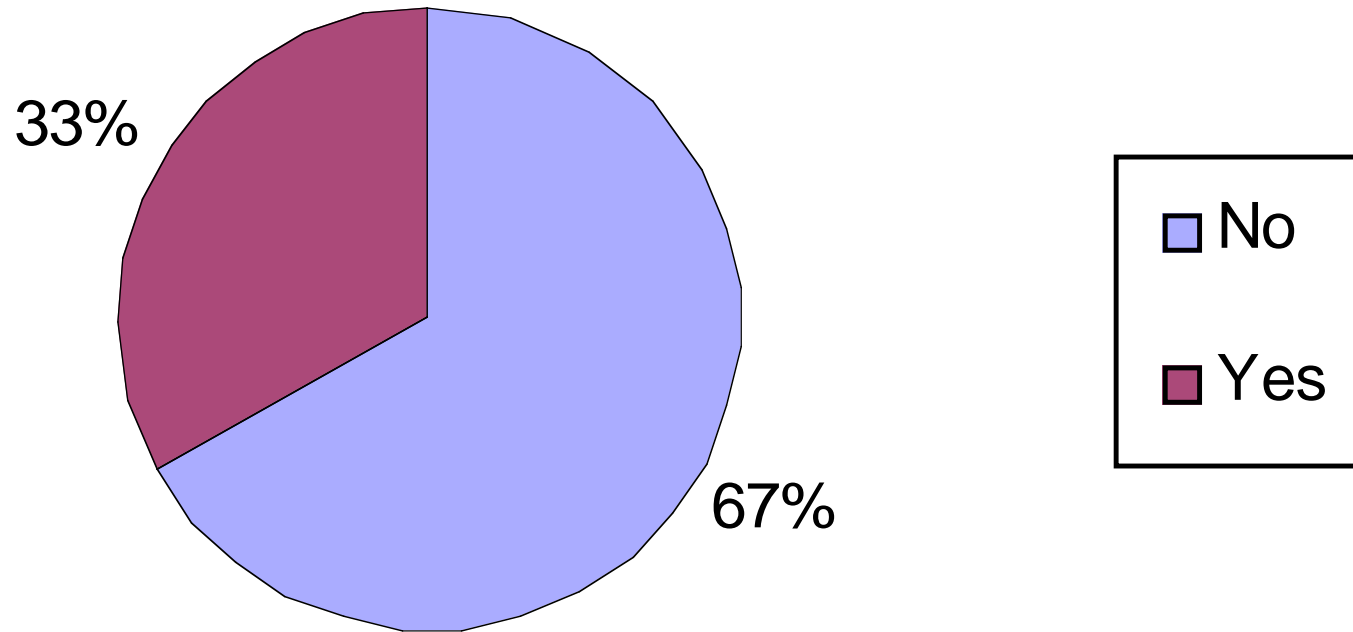
TOP 10:



- Bacteria
- Sediment
- Implementation
- Funding
- Disolved Oxygen
- Monitoring
- Modeling
- Nutrients
- Mercury
- Buffers

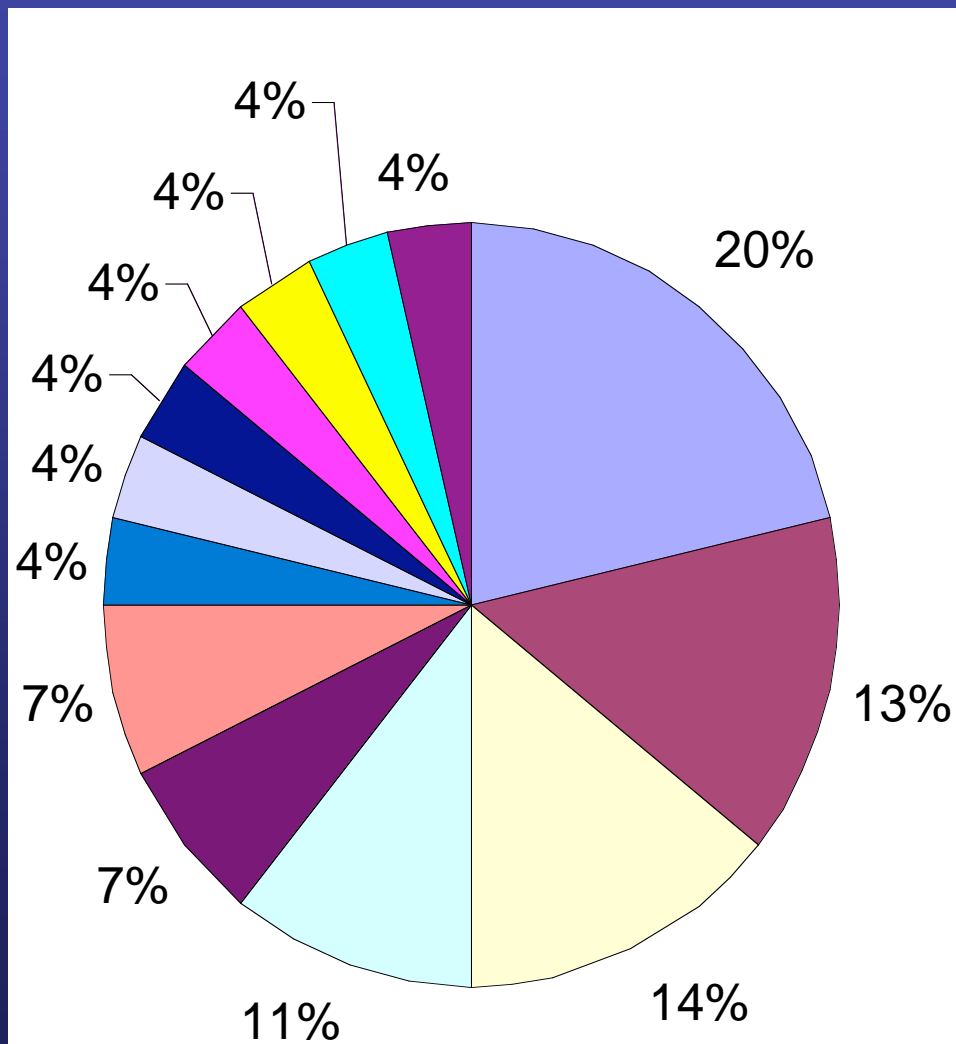
TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q3. Have you ever participated in setting a TMDL?



TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q3. *If yes, which TMDL?*



- Bacteria
- Dissolved Oxygen
- Sediment
- Several

TMDL TAG Survey Results

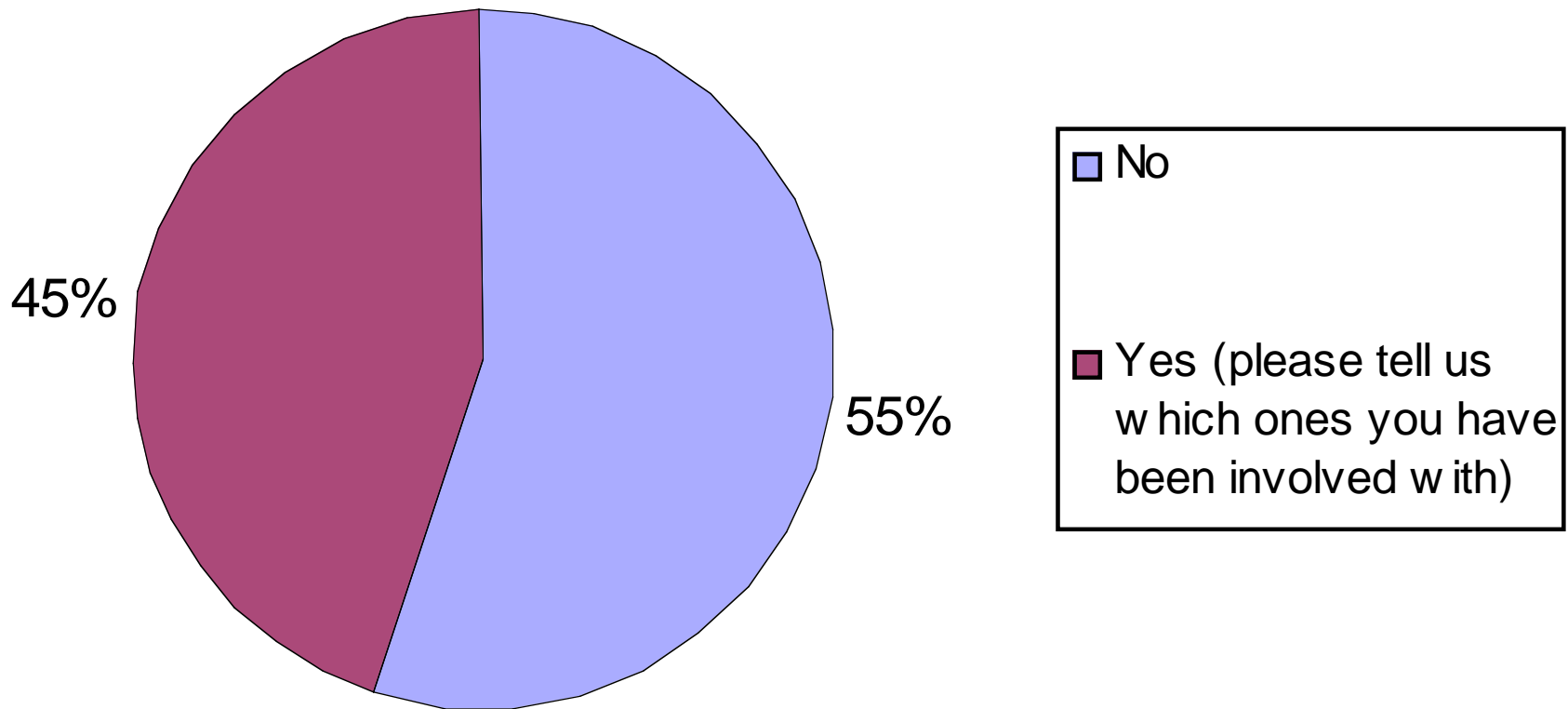
Q4. Comments/Concerns on how TMDLs set?



- Standardize data collection and monitoring for setting TMDLs (time and geographic scales)
- Recognition that many TMDLs set under legal pressure and imposed deadlines.
- Budget constraints simplify process

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q5. Have you ever participated in development of a TMDL Implementation Plan or have you ever been involved with a stakeholder group involved in the development of a TMDL Implementation plan?



TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q6. If you have been involved, describe and evaluate your experience with the implementation plan development process?



- **Mixed Reviews**
- **Many comments based on need for good data**
- **Process helpful to get to know other in watershed**
- **Need emphasis on conservation practices on the ground**

TMDL TAG Survey Results

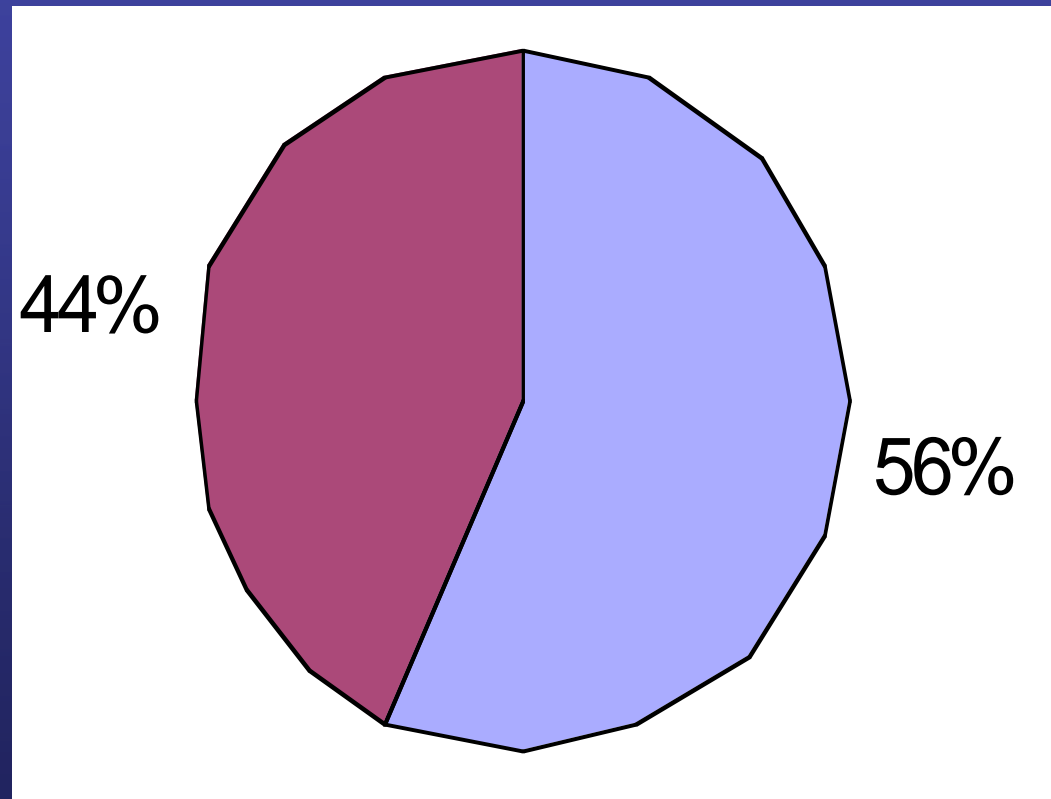
Q7. How would you improve the TMDL Implementation Plan development process in Georgia?



- Suite of measures
- Funding, monitoring, enforcement, and education
- Adaptive implementation process to incorporate new science
- Good science and data
- Take ownership of plans
- More participation of citizens
- Tie TMDLs, implementation plans, and land use regulations

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q8. Are you or your agency/group involved in implementing any portion of the TMDL Implementation Plan?



■ No ■ Yes (describe which portion)

TMDL TAG Survey Results

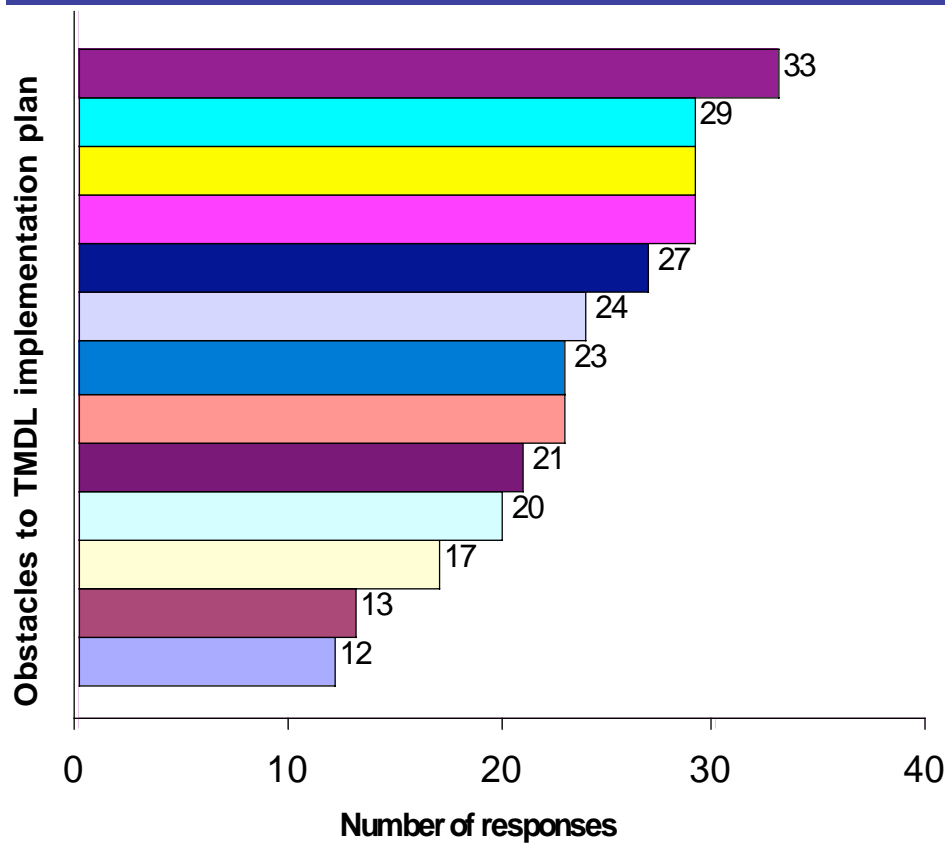
Q8. If yes, describe which portion



- BMP implementation
- Data collection and water quality modeling
- Outreach and education
- Stormwater
- Sewer/septic repairs
- Watershed surveys

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q9. What are the biggest obstacles to achieving your TMDL implementation plan (check all that apply)?



TOP 8:

- Data collection & assessment
- State government support
- Education and Outreach
- Local politics
- Interagency coordination
- Local Infrastructure
- Water quality monitoring stations
- Technical resources

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q9. Other, please specify



- BMPs to control bacteria
- Funding – in rural areas, local govt's struggle to make bond payments, 1 staff person, and many duties.
- Local ability to control and enforce
- Ensuring participation long-term

TMDL TAG Survey Results

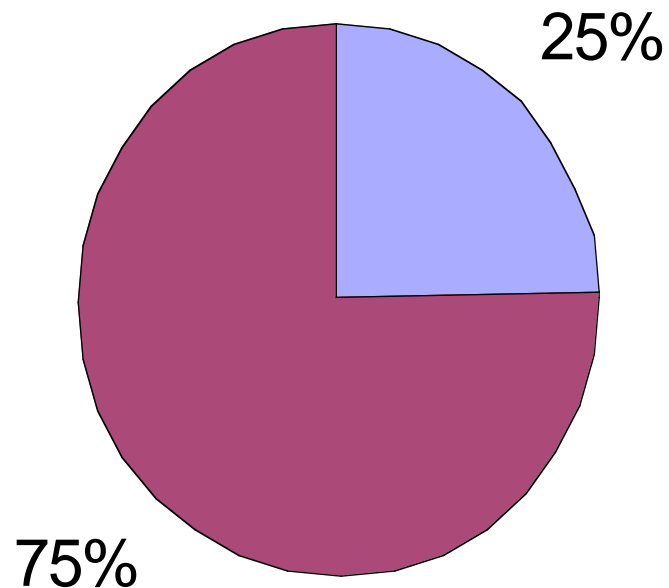
Q10. How would you improve the TMDL Implementation Plan implementation in Georgia?



- Watershed approach to pollution sources
- Funding for science & enforcement
- Fund watershed coordinator and workshops for implementation
- Education and outreach (press) on local regulatory bodies, TMDLs, links in watershed, & restoration
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for non-attainment to improve accountability

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q11. Have you ever read a TMDL document (the document that describes the TMDL itself)?

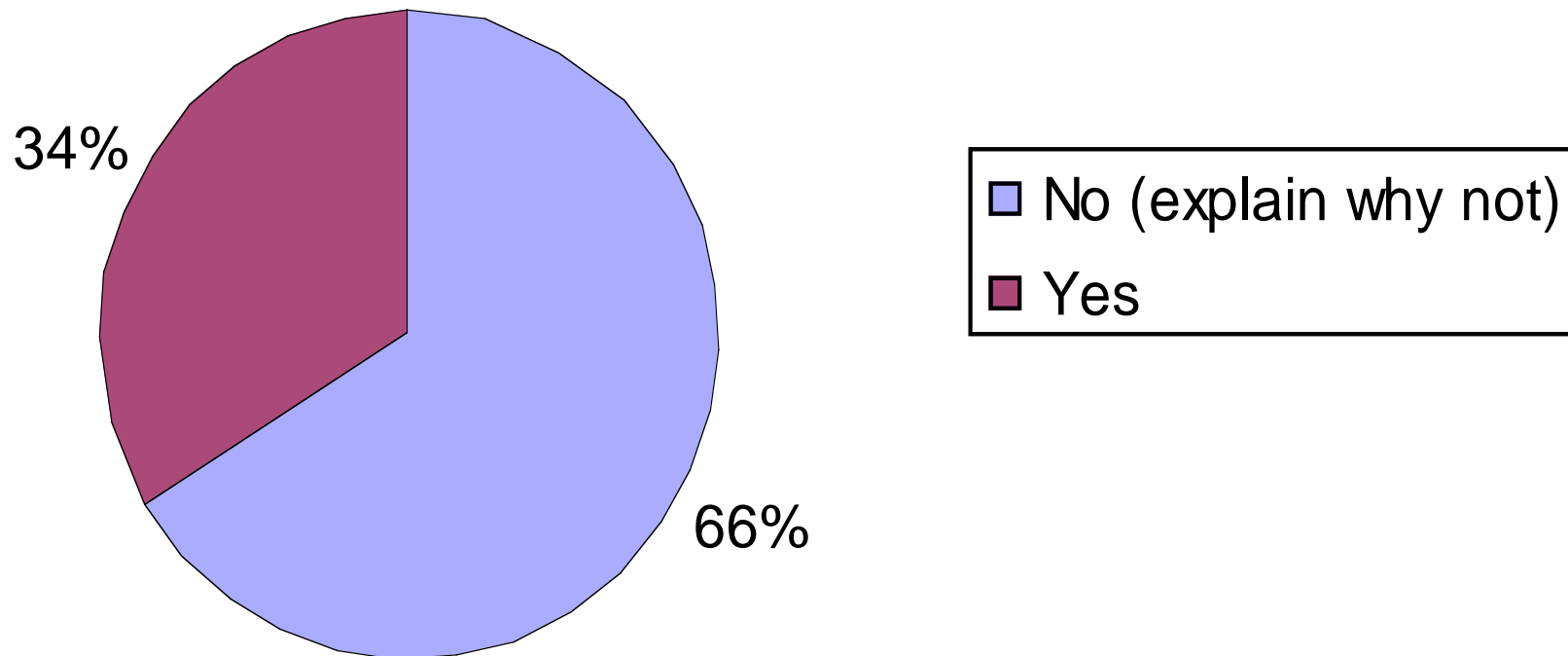


■ No

■ Yes (tell us which TMDL(s) you have read)

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q13. If yes, did you find that the TMDL implementation plan had all the information needed to understand the water quality problem and the means for restoring water quality?



TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q13. (Continued) 66% did not believe TMDL implementation plan had all the information needed...



- Limited data and sampling points
- Need specific, practical water quality restoration measures and enforcement
- Need better indication of pollution sources
- Lack of monitoring of BMPs

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q14. What would you change about how the TMDL documents are written in Georgia?



- More EPD involvement & elected officials support
- Ensure all responsible agencies have resources
- More ownership at watershed level
- Summary maps and background information
- BMPs and efficiency #'s to implement properly
- Address limitations of data and interpretation of data

TMDL TAG Survey Results

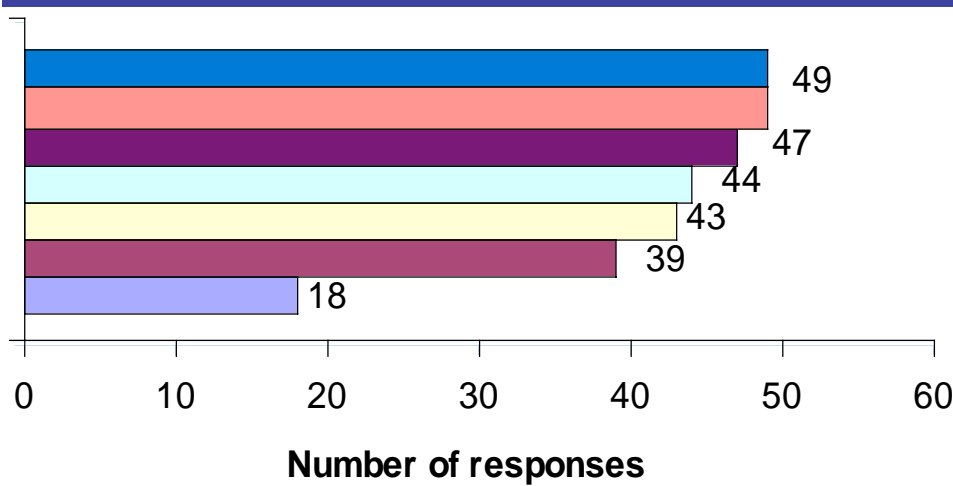
Q15. What is working with TMDLs and tell us about TMDL implementation success stories in your area?



- Education of local agencies, stakeholders, public, developers
- TMDL concept has expanded to more watershed assessments – *(need ecological condition emphasis)*
- More realistic sampling methods
- Good record keeping
- Good starting point for public restoration efforts
- UGA extension – helpful resource
- Stormwater efforts (e.g. utility)

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q16. How can the EPD or the TAG be helpful to you in your work (check all that apply)?



- 1) Provide on-the ground technical support for implementation
- 2) Conduct research
- 3) Provide written materials
- 4) Enforce existing regulations
- 5) Provide web-based clearinghouse of information for Georgia TMDL development
- 6) Conduct training workshops
- 7) Other (please specify)

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q16. Other (please provide comments on any of the above?)



- Conduct local TMDL TAG workshops for core groups involved in implementation
- Staffed TMDL Center (s) to provide technical support basin-wide
- List of BMPs and effectiveness
- Provide summary of funding opportunities
- Assist in baseline data collection
- GIS capability with streams and listings
- Training workshops for municipal and county commissioners to motivate support

TMDL TAG Survey Results

Q17. Please share any other comments you have about the TMDL program in Georgia and how it can be more effective.



- Centralized website
- Emphasize good science
- TMDLs on all waters of state
- Enforcement of land disturbing activities.

Challenges and Problems Identified by Georgia TMDL Program Stakeholders

TMDL TAG Workshop, GWRC March 2007

Strawman Recommendations:

- 1) Assessment & Monitoring
- 2) Infrastructure & Coordination
- 3) Technical Support/Information Clearinghouse
- 4) Funding
- 5) Regulatory Guidance and Authority



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