

# Focus on a National Framework for Monitoring

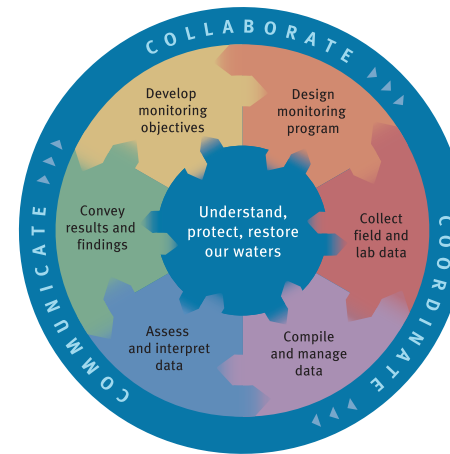
The process of monitoring and assessment should principally be seen as a sequence of related activities that

- start with the definition of formal needs,
- and end with the use of the information product.



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Where, how and why are water quality conditions changing over time?  
 Where are the problems related to water quality?  
 What is causing these problems?  
 Are programs to prevent or remediate problems working effectively?



## The strategy:

National goals are formulated and carried out through Council meetings and work groups. Biennial conferences provide feedback from constituents and also shape the Council's goals and objectives. The Council is organized into work groups whose activities and products advance these goals.

**Water Information Strategies** defines and promotes goal-oriented monitoring by proposing strategies for network design, data analysis and interpretation, and reporting results in support of the needs of water quality management.

**Methods and Data Comparability Board** provides a forum for exploring, evaluating, and promoting methods that facilitate collaboration and further comparability between water quality monitoring programs.

**Watershed Components Interactions** provides an improved understanding of the factors affecting water quality within watersheds; assesses how these components interact to promote development of effective monitoring strategies.

**Collaboration and Outreach** works to build partnerships that foster collaboration among the many elements of the water monitoring community by supporting development of state and regional monitoring councils and promoting the importance of monitoring for decisionmaking.



VISIT COUNCIL'S WEBSITE AT:  
<http://water.usgs.gov/wicp/acwi/monitoring>

Are water quality goals and standards being met?

## Working Together for Clean Water

### For further information:

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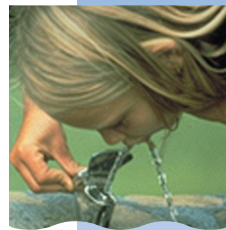
*Photos courtesy U.S. Geological Survey, except waterfall and water drop on cover, and as otherwise credited.  
 April 2004*



*Working Together for Clean Water*

**Clean, safe and abundant water is one of our planet's greatest treasures.**

**We depend on it for drinking, for bathing and cleaning, to provide recreational**



**opportunities, to sustain wildlife and plants, and to meet countless other needs. We will not succeed in protect-**

**ing the integrity of our nation's waters unless Americans act as stewards of their local water resources and pay careful attention to pollutants, development and other factors that can threaten this precious resource.**



*Compilation of remarks*  
Senator John H. Chafee

*This paper is made from 50% totally chlorine-free virgin pulp and 50% recycled pulp with 20% post-consumer waste content*

# What is the National Water Quality Monitoring Council?

The National Water Quality Monitoring Council was created in 1997. It has 35 members—a balanced representation of federal, tribal, interstate, state, local and municipal governments, watershed and environmental groups, the volunteer monitoring community, universities and the private sector, including the regulated community. The Council is co-chaired by the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Council is chartered as a subgroup of the Advisory Committee on Water Information under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. It meets several times a year in locations throughout the country.



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## Purpose:

The purpose of the Council is to provide a national forum for coordination of consistent and scientifically defensible methods and strategies to improve water quality monitoring, assessment, and reporting. The Council promotes partnerships to foster collaboration, advance the science, and improve management within all elements of the water quality monitoring community. A vital aspect of this role is to encourage increased understanding and stewardship of our water resources.



**How clean is our water?  
What is the condition of the nation's surface, ground, estuarine and coastal waters?**

## The challenge:

Each year government agencies, industry, academia and private organizations devote enormous amounts of time, energy, and money to monitor, protect, manage, and restore water resources and watersheds. Differences in project design, methods, data analysis, and data management have often made it difficult for monitoring information and results to be shared and used by all. The restoration and protection of water quality is dependent upon detailed, understandable, easily accessible data and information.



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