

# EPA's Water Quality Framework

Next Steps Toward Improved Accountability

## What is EPA's Water Quality Framework?

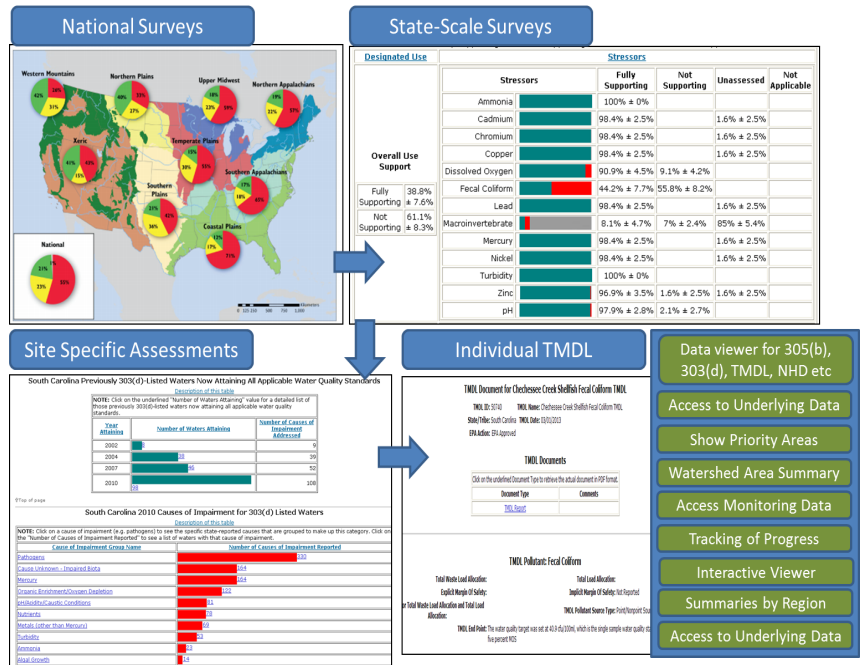
The WQF works across program activities to align information management systems to track water quality conditions and program actions at the national, state and local scales. The WQF will link monitoring data from hundreds of sources, provide analysis tools to screen and interpret data, display assessment conditions from the national to local level, and track actions aimed at protecting and restoring water quality.

## Benefits of this approach

- Integrating data systems through the implementation of the Water Quality Framework:
- Streamlines data discovery, screening and analysis, review and reporting
- Provides national and state context to local conditions
- Links monitoring data to assessment findings
- Improves transparency, encourages public participation
- Connects data, decisions and actions geospatially
- Supports use of data, sharing of open source tools

### Questions about the Framework? Contact:

Dwane Young  
 U.S. EPA Office of Water  
 202-566-1214  
[Young.dwane@epa.gov](mailto:Young.dwane@epa.gov)



This graphic represents visually, the linkage of monitoring data, assessment decisions, and actions enabling managers and the public to track conditions and progress at multiple scales. Key features allow users to:

- View the big picture based on consistent assessment of conditions at the national scale
- Drill to results of state scale surveys of water quality conditions
- Focus on local waterbodies and get site specific assessments
- Track priorities for protection and restoration
- Use geospatial information linked to the national water map (NHDPlus) to navigate geospatial relationships among monitoring stations, flow levels, landscape conditions, assessment decisions, pollution sources and actions to protect and restore water quality

More information is available at the Framework SharePoint site:

<https://usepa.sharepoint.com/sites/OW/Work/WQF>

And the public web site: <https://www.epa.gov/waterdata/water-quality-framework>

## Implementing the Framework - Aligning Programs and Systems

The WQF is pulling together existing systems. Our goal is to draw from and connect data, streamline work flow, and better support decision making. This list shows primary projects and information management systems supporting the key steps in evaluating water quality and tracking progress toward restoration.

---

### Standards for sharing data

Water Quality Exchange: <http://www.epa.gov/storet>

### Portal for accessing data

Water Quality Portal: <http://waterqualitydata.us>

---

### **Water Quality Exchange/Water Quality Portal:**

Compiles water quality monitoring data from federal, state, tribal, and local entities throughout the United States, and then makes that data available through easy-to-access web sites and web services.

---

### **Open-Source Data Discovery and Data Analysis**

**Tools:** EPA is developing open-source tools for discovering calculating, comparing and interpreting monitoring data against water quality standards using automated statistical analysis tools.



Get the Tool!



### National Aquatic Resource Surveys

<https://www.epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys>

### ATTAINS

<https://www.epa.gov/waterdata/assessment-and-total-maximum-daily-load-tracking-and-implementation-system-attains>

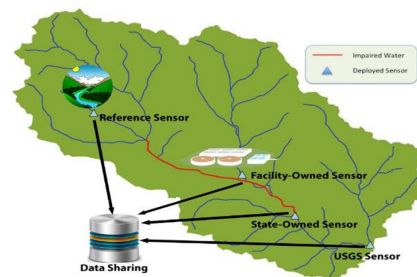
---

### **Reporting on the Status of the Nation's Waters:**

From the National scale National Aquatic Resource Surveys (NARS) to the local scale water quality assessments, the Framework is integrating information across these systems to tell the entire water quality story, including those actions being taken to restore water quality and our progress in achieving that goal.

---

**Continuous Monitoring Data:** EPA has initiated two pilot projects (one in New Jersey, and one in Ohio) to explore approaches for sharing continuous monitoring data. The demonstration projects are expected to be complete in December 2016, and should demonstrate the concepts.



**Linking to a Common Stream Network:** The NHDPlus provides a nationally consistent stream network for tying all of the information from the Framework together and allowing for the discovery of relevant data using upstream/downstream navigation tools.

### National Hydrography Dataset Plus

<https://www.epa.gov/waterdata/nhdplus-national-hydrography-dataset-plus>