

Community-based Water Monitoring: A Decade of Global Experiences

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Biographical Sketch of Author

Bill Deutsch has degrees in Zoology, Biology, Anthropology and Aquatic Ecology and has been a Research Fellow in the Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures at Auburn University for 16 years. Prior to that, he worked 11 years as a Research Biologist and Director of Aquatic Research for private environmental consultants in Pennsylvania. He has been the Program Manager for Alabama Water Watch since it began in 1992, and directs Global Water Watch through AU's International Center for Aquaculture and Aquatic Environments.

Abstract

With partnerships and funding from numerous state and federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations, Auburn University has initiated community-based water monitoring projects (CBWM) in Alabama, the Philippines, Ecuador, Brazil and Thailand. Participants range from U.S. middle class, lakefront property owners to peasant farmers of the upland tropics. More than 10 years of experience with these efforts has led to the development of a CBWM model designed for the practitioner. The model includes the process of organizing groups and selecting appropriate technologies, collecting and managing credible data, and data-to-action strategies that lead to sustainable projects and improved watershed management. Each project generated lessons that were shared among all, and a Global Water Watch network of monitoring groups is expanding with indigenous leadership.