

EPA's Integrated Reporting Guidance

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Abstract

EPA has developed guidance that encourages States to provide a single water quality monitoring and assessment report (the integrated report) that combines the comprehensive 305(b) report on water quality and the CWA section 303(d) list of waters for which TMDLs are required, while also satisfying the requirements of CWA section 314.

The Integrated Report Guidance (IR) uses 5 discrete reporting categories, representing varying levels of water quality standards attainment, ranging from Category 1, where all of a water's designated uses are met, to Category 5, where a pollutant impairs a water and a TMDL is required.

The IR emphasizes the need for sound assessment methodologies and thorough documentation of the links between water quality standards and the rationale for categorization. It also describes acceptable minimum data and sample size requirements in identifying impaired waters.

The IR promotes the use of probability based monitoring and the rotating basin approach to develop State monitoring programs that balance the ability to conduct broad scale analyses of water quality conditions with the monitoring necessary to make scientifically and statistically sound categorizations of waters.

The IR emphasizes the importance of the development and consistent application of a "geo-referencing" scheme to report water quality of each defined segment, document changes in that segment, evaluate the effectiveness of management actions to attain and maintain water quality, and to obtain insights into important ecosystem processes occurring in the segment.