

## **NOAA's National Status and Trends Program: An Overview**

**M. Jawed Hameedi, G.G. Lauenstein, S.I. Hartwell, and W.E. Johnson**

NOAA, N/SCI1, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

### **Abstract**

NOAA has developed and managed its National Status and Trends Program since 1984 to carry out environmental monitoring and assessment, and associated research, to provide data and information products that contribute toward an effective stewardship of the Nation's estuarine, coastal and Great Lakes resources. The principal components of the program have included long-term monitoring (the Mussel Watch Project) to evaluate the status and trends of coastal pollution; documentation of contaminant residues in fish and measures of adverse biological effects (Benthic Surveillance Project); geographically comprehensive regional assessments to determine the nature and extent of sediment toxicity and its associated adverse biological effect in specific waterbodies (Bioeffects Assessment Project); development and application of environmental indicators, such as biomarkers and ecological indices; and dissemination of quality assured data and information products. The program has also been instrumental in developing quality assurance protocols, applying new measurement techniques, providing interpreted data and information products to users. A significant new effort is underway to compile and organize the program's data and make them accessible to users via Internet from a NOAA website. The website dissemination of data is intended not only to ensure wider distribution of data, it will also allow mapping and analyses and visualization capabilities through a variety of data display and analytical tools. Its use will greatly facilitate sharing of coastal environmental data among researchers, resource managers and the public at large, thereby promoting more informed and transparent decisions.