

304(a) water quality criteria that EPA publishes by the end of 2001. EPA intends to notify States and authorized Tribes by March 2001 which waterbody type and ecoregions EPA expects to address in section 304(a) criteria published by the end of 2001.

EPA recognizes that the ecoregions addressed in the section 304(a) water quality criteria for nutrients published by the end of 2001 may not represent complete coverage across all State and Tribal waters, may not overlap with important watershed boundaries, and may not reflect high priority waters. In developing their own criteria for specific waters, States and authorized Tribes have the flexibility to first address geographic areas and waterbody types other than those specified in the section 304(a) criteria published by the end of 2001, particularly if a State or authorized Tribe has efforts underway to develop criteria for those areas. However, EPA would continue to expect States and authorized Tribes to adopt nutrient criteria by 2004 for all waterbody types and ecoregions addressed in the section 304(a) criteria published by the end of 2001. The plan for developing and adopting nutrient criteria, completed by the end of 2001, should address these considerations.

(3) EPA intends to propose to promulgate nutrient water quality criteria, relying substantially on EPA's section 304(a) water quality criteria, by the end of 2004, where States and authorized Tribes have not substantially completed their adoption of such criteria according to the plan completed by the end of 2001, if the Administrator determines that such new or revised standards are necessary to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

(4) As EPA issues additional section 304(a) nutrient criteria recommendations in 2002 and beyond, States and authorized Tribes should continue to adopt nutrient criteria for the remaining waterbody types and ecoregions. Such efforts should generally follow a schedule similar to the sequence in (1) through (3) above, with the years adjusted to reflect the date EPA issues each set of criteria.

Dated: December 29, 2000.

J. Charles Fox,

Assistant Administrator, Office of Water.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-6930-7]

Estuarine and Coastal Marine Waters: Bioassessment and Biocriteria Technical Guidance Document; Notice of Availability

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: EPA is announcing the availability of the *Estuarine and Coastal Marine Waters: Bioassessment and Biocriteria Technical Guidance* document developed and published pursuant to section 304(a)(8) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). This technical guidance document helps fulfill CWA section 101(a) which states, in summary, "The objective of this Act is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters."

To help protect the biological integrity of the Nation's waters, this technical guidance provides an extensive collection of methods and protocols for conducting bioassessments in estuarine and coastal marine waters and the procedures for deriving biocriteria from the results. Case studies illustrate the bioassessment process and biocriteria derivation procedures. The document outlines physical classification of estuaries and coastal marine waters, and discusses sampling methods and candidate metrics for four core groups of biological indicator assemblages: benthic macroinvertebrates, fish, aquatic macrophytes, and phytoplankton. Three sampling tiers are developed, increasing in sampling effort, precision, and diagnostic ability. Alternative data analysis methods are introduced for biological index development, and the document ends with eight case studies illustrating the implementation of the methods.

Many natural resource agencies throughout the United States are using bioassessments and biocriteria for small rivers and streams and some States are beginning work in lakes and reservoirs. EPA issued guidance documents for these water bodies in 1996 and 1998, respectively (*Biological Criteria: Technical Guidance for Streams and Small Rivers* (EPA-822-B-96-001) and *Lake and Reservoir Bioassessment and Biocriteria Technical Guidance Document* (EPA 841-B-98-007)).

With the use of this guidance State/Tribal and Federal water resource managers will be able to better protect and restore the biological integrity of

coastal and estuarine resources. This guidance is not a regulation and does not impose legally-binding requirements on EPA, States, Territories, Tribes, or the public.

Availability of Documents: The guidance is published with the following title and EPA document number: *Estuarine and Coastal Marine Waters: Bioassessment and Biocriteria Technical Guidance*, (EPA 822-B-00-024), dated December 2000. The document and a summary Fact Sheet are available on the EPA website at www.epa.gov/ost/biocriteria/. Paper copies can be obtained from the U.S. EPA, Water Resource Center by phone at: (202) 260-7786, or by sending an e-mail to the Center at center.water-resource@epa.gov, or through conventional mail by sending a letter of request to U.S. EPA Water Resource Center, Ariel Rios Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20460.

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Dated: December 22, 2000.

Geoffrey H. Grubbs,

Director, Office of Science and Technology.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-6931-6]

Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-1999

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of document availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Draft Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990-1999 is available for public review and comment. Annual U.S. emissions for the period of time from 1990-1999 are summarized and presented by source category and sector. The inventory contains estimates of carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), Hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), perfluorocarbons (PFC), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆) emissions. The inventory also includes updated estimates of carbon sequestration in U.S. forests and soils. The technical approach used in this report to estimate greenhouse gas emissions from sources and removals by sinks is consistent with the methodologies recommended by the