



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF  
THE ADMINISTRATOR

January 3, 2002

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned on Planning and Scoping for Environmental Risk Assessments

FROM: William H. Farland, Ph.D. /s/  
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TO: Assistant Administrators  
Regional Administrators  
General Counsel  
Chief Financial Officer  
Inspector General  
Associate Administrators

Several years ago, the Science Policy Council (SPC) issued [guidance on planning and scoping for cumulative risk](#). It described a process for engaging risk assessors, risk managers, and stakeholders in defining the scope of a cumulative risk assessment and urged the Agency to apply it. Later, the SPC conducted workshops to demonstrate how the guidance could be applied and to gain practical experience from these applications. This new document extracts lessons and advice about planning and scoping that have been gained from those workshops and case studies. While the initial guidance was focused on cumulative risk, these lessons are drawn from a wider set of risk assessment problems.

Planning and scoping sets the stage for developing scientific information about hazards, exposures, and risks from environmental stressors for humans and ecological entities. The lessons learned illustrate organizing principles for identifying participants, bounding the problem, developing a conceptual model, and planning the analysis for the risk assessment. The lessons show that early stakeholder input can help focus the analysis and improve stakeholder confidence in the decision-making process. For risk managers, planning and scoping enables the risk assessment to better inform their decisions.

I strongly recommend that you use the planning and scoping guidance and the lessons learned as part of your approach for developing risk assessments to inform your risk management decisions. The SPC plans to conduct training workshops to apply the guidance to an actual problem. We would appreciate your suggestions for candidate cases and workshop venues.

Attachment