

# **APNEP's Aquatic Fauna Monitoring & Assessment Activity Phase I (2008-2010) and Pre-Phase II (2011-2016)**

**Dean Carpenter**

**Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership**

**Aquatic Fauna Monitoring & Assessment Workshop**

**Imperial Centre for Arts and Sciences**

**5 October 2017**

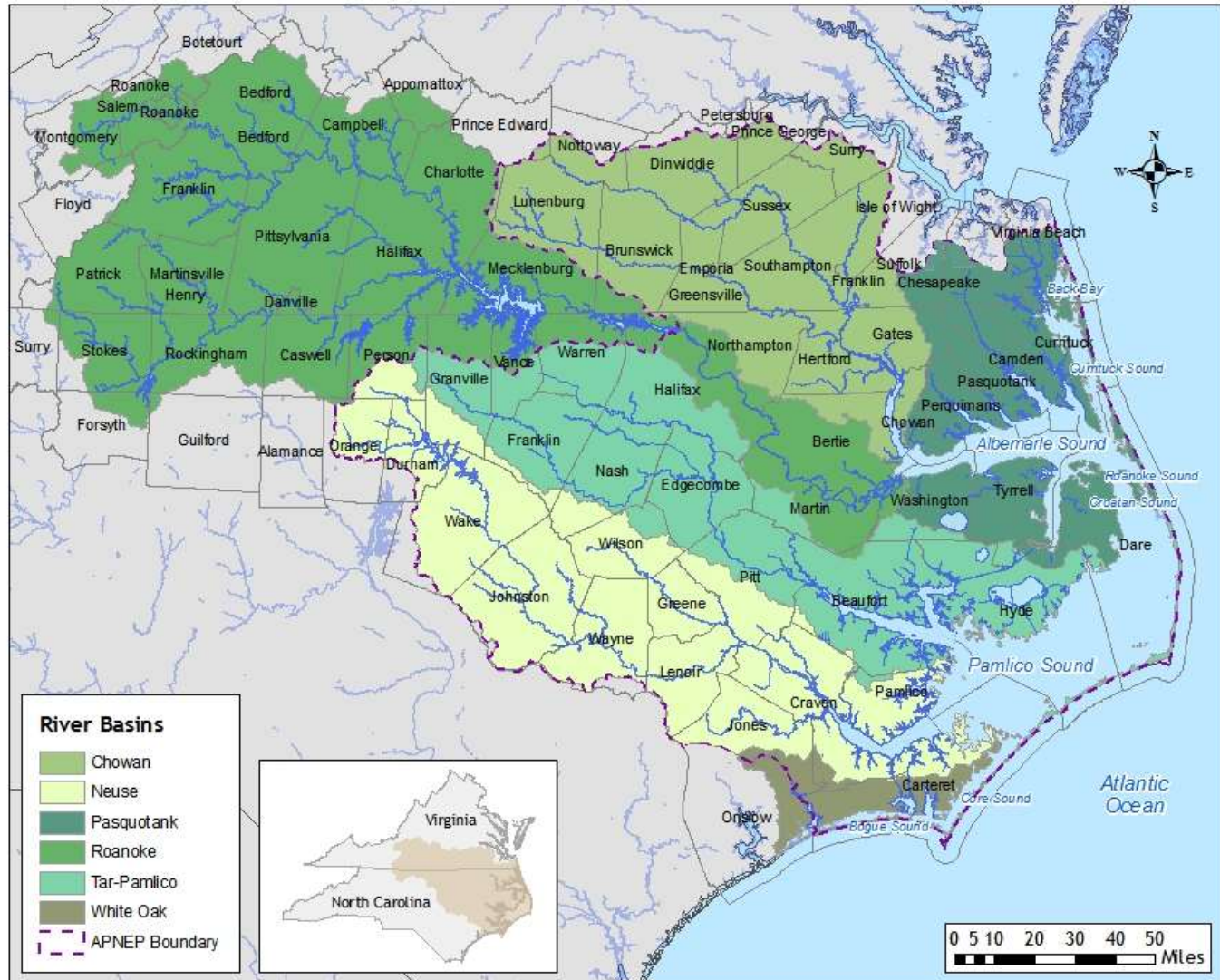


# APNEP Mission

“To **identify**, **restore**, and **protect** the significant resources of the Albemarle-Pamlico estuarine system.”



# APNEP Implementation Area and Management Institutions



# APNEP Aquatic Fauna\*

## Monitoring & Assessment (Phase I)

- Develop a **monitoring strategy** for Living Aquatic Resource metrics within the APNEP region
- Metric-specific monitoring **proposals**
- Indicators to be featured in the APNEP Regional Ecosystem Assessment



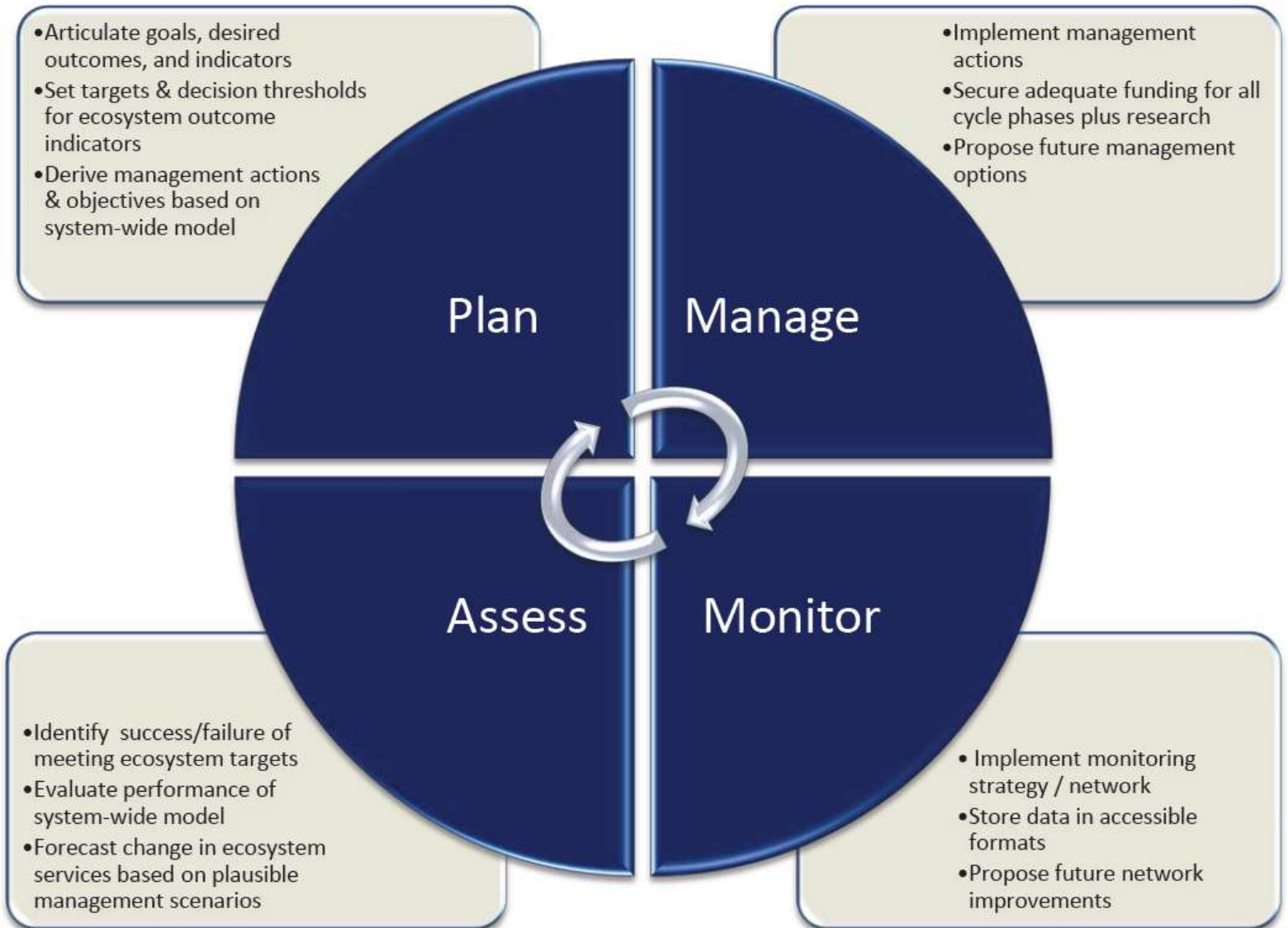
# APNEP's Transition to Ecosystem-Based Management

- A **holistic vision and plan** that includes a comprehensive description of the A-P system and articulation of multiple management objectives.
- A community that has **effective engagement** of policy makers, managers, scientists, & stakeholders.
- A process that includes effective **adaptive management** to address a changing system.
- A **framework** that includes appropriate authority, implementation area, management institutions, financial resources, and effective communications.

# APNEP's Ecosystem Health Goals

- A region where **human communities** are sustained by a functioning ecosystem
- A region where aquatic, wetland, and upland habitats support viable populations of **native species**
- A region where **water** quantity and quality maintain ecological integrity

Figure 2: APNEP's adaptive management cycle.



# APNEP Targets 2017-2018

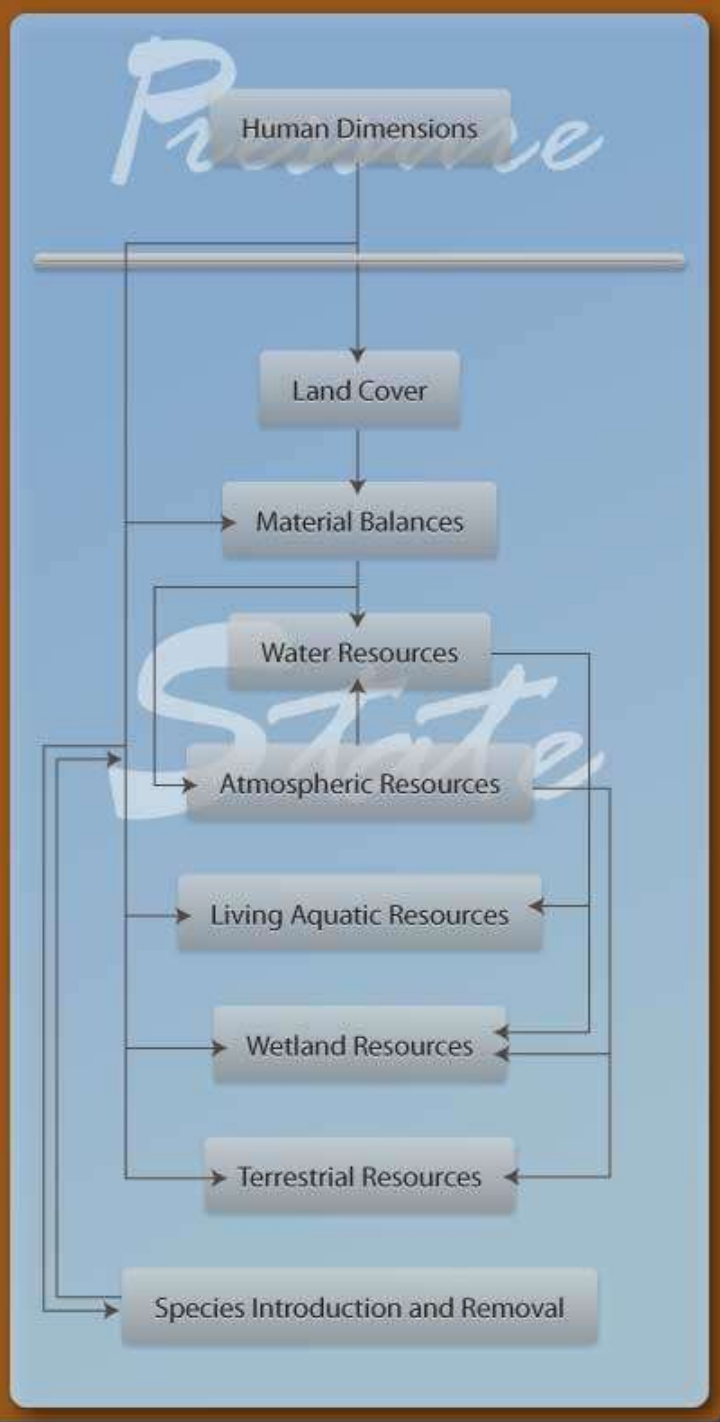
- Regional Ecosystem Assessment 2.0
  - Indicator Specification 1.1
- Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP) 2.1
  - Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) Plan 1.0
- Integrated Monitoring Strategy 1.0
  - Indicator Specification 1.1



# APNEP Monitoring & Assessment 2008-2010

- APNEP staff adopt indicators/metrics in 2007
- Plan in 2008 to develop an integrated monitoring strategy for those indicators
- In concert with APNEP revising its Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP)
- Six APNEP resource monitoring & assessment teams

# Regional Ecosystem Model



# Aquatic Fauna\* Monitoring & Assessment Team Representation (Phase I)

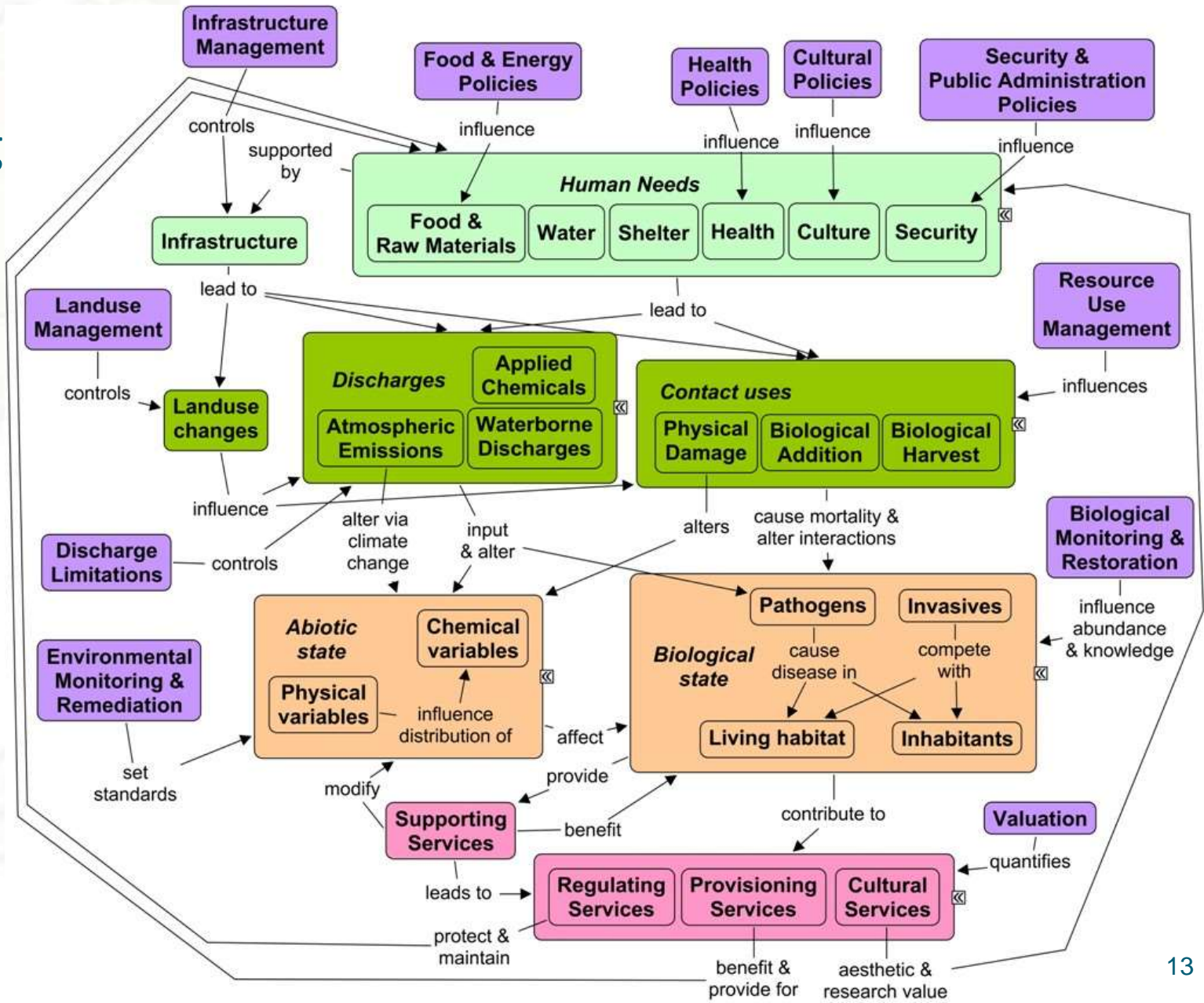
- APNEP
- NC-DENR
  - DMF
  - DWQ
  - DWR
  - NHP
- NC-WRC
- VA-SNR
  - DCR (NHP)
  - DEQ
  - DGIF
  - MRC
- Federal
  - EPA
  - FWS
  - NOAA
  - USGS
- STAC/ Ex-STAC
  - ECU
  - UNC-CH
  - NatureServe
  - NCCF
  - NCWF
  - TNC

# EPA Indicator Development for Estuaries

- Program Planning
- Conceptual Model Development
- Indicator Specification
- Monitoring Program Development
- Implementation
- Reassessment



# DPSER Modeling



Lt. green = Drivers  
 Dk. Green = Pressure  
 Orange = State  
 Red = Ecosystem Services  
 Purple = Response

EPA-ORD-ESRP 2010



# APNEP Indicator Definition

“A **numerical value** derived from actual measurements of a pressure, state or ambient condition, exposure, ecological condition, or measure of human health or wellbeing over a specified **geographic domain**, whose trends over time represent or draw attention to underlying **trends** in the condition of the environment in the A-P region.”

# APNEP Indicator Criteria

- **Utilization:** Address a key process or property, and answers (or makes an important contribution toward answering) an important question about conditions in the A-P region
- **Objectivity:** Developed and presented in an accurate, clear, complete, and unbiased manner
- **Integrity:** Underlying data should be characterized by sound collection methodologies and data management systems adequate to protect its integrity, and to comply with quality assurance procedures
- **Availability:** Data should be available and timely, or will likely be available in the future, to maintain the indicator's utility
- **Representation:** Trends should accurately represent the underlying trends in the target population
- **Clarity:** The indicator should be clearly defined and reproducible. The specific data used and the specific assumptions, analytical methods, and statistical procedures employed are clearly stated

# APNEP Objectives-Metrics Hierarchy

- Modules
- Categories
- Dimensions
- Metrics



# Candidate Aquatic Fauna Indicators

Module	Category	Dimension	Indicator		
VI: Living Aquatic Resources	VI-A: Living Aquatic Incidents of Concern	VI-A-1: Community Simplification	VI-A-1-a	Fish Fauna Integrity	
			VI-A-1-b	Low-Diversity Benthic Macroinvertebrate Faunas	
			VI-A-2-a	Fish Kills	
		VI-A-3: Fish and Shellfish Diseases/Parasites	VI-A-3-a	Acute Fish Disease Incidence	
			VI-A-3-b	Chronic Fish Disease/Parasite Incidence	
			VI-A-3-c	Incidence of Dermo ( <i>Perkinsus marinus</i> ) in Oysters	
			VI-B-1-a	Rare Taxa Presence	
			VI-B-1-b	Rare Community Representation	
			VI-B-1-c	Freshwater Hard Bottom	
	VI-B: Aquatic Habitat	VI-B-1: General Habitat Condition	VI-B-1-d	SAV Area/Zone/Density/Potential/Phenology by Species	
			VI-B-2-a	Quality & Extent of Anadromous Fish Spawning/Nursery Areas	
			VI-B-2-b	Inaccessible Fish Spawning Area by Obstruction Type	
		VI-B-3: Aquatic Protected Areas	VI-B-3-a	Oyster Sanctuaries & Shellfish Harvest Closure Areas	
		VI-C: Living Resource Populations	VI-C-1: Marine Mammals	VI-C-1-a	Bottlenose Dolphin Range and Population Condition
				VI-C-2-a	Fish Stock Condition (SSB and Age Structure) by Commercial and Recreational Species
			VI-C-2: Fish	VI-C-2-b	Fish Population Condition by Ecologically Important Species
				VI-C-2-c	Atlantic Sturgeon and Carolina Madtom Occurrences
				VI-C-3-a	Diamondback Terrapin Range and Population Condition
	VI-C-3-b			Freshwater Turtles Range and Population Condition	
	VI-C: Living Resource Populations	VI-C-3: Reptiles	VI-C-3-c	American Alligator Range and Population Condition	
			VI-C-3-d	Sea Turtles Range and Population Condition	
			VI-C-4-a	Blue Crab Spawning Stock Biomass	
		VI-C-4: Crustaceans	VI-C-4-b	Penaeid Shrimp Stock Condition	
			VI-C-4-c	Spiny Crayfish Occurrence	
			VI-C-5-a	Eastern Oyster Bed Extent and Densities	
		VI-C-5: Bivalve Molluscs	VI-C-5-b	Hard Clam Bed Extent and Densities	
			VI-C-5-c	Freshwater Mussels Range and Population Condition	
			VI-C-6-a	EPT Index	
	VI-C-6: Freshwater Invertebrates	VI-C-6-b	Invertebrate IBI Index		
		VI-D-1-a	Total Toxicant Body Burdens in Species (TBD)		
VI-D: Toxicant Burdens		VI-D-1: Toxicants in Tissue	VI-D-1-b	Mercury in Species (TBD) Tissues	
			VI-D-1-c	Dioxin in Fish Tissue	
			VI-D-1-d	Fish Consumption Advisories	
			VI-D-1-e	Marine Mammal Tissue Contaminants	
IX: Species Introductions & Removals	IX-A: Invasive Aquatic Species	IX-A-4: Invasive Aquatic Herptofauna	IX-A-4-a	TBD Invasive Amphibian Species Population Status/Occurrences	
			IX-A-5-a	TBD Invasive Estuarine-Marine Fish Species Population Status/Occurrences	
		IX-A-5: Invasive Fish	IX-A-5-b	TBD Invasive Freshwater Fish Species Population Status/Occurrences	
			IX-A-7: Invasives Invertebrates	IX-A-7-a	TBD Invasive Mollusc Species Population Status/Occurrences
				IX-A-7-b	TBD Invasive Crustacean Species Population Status/Occurrences
		IX-A-7-c	TBD Invasive Aquatic Insect Species Population Status/Occurrences		
		IX-B: Vulnerable Aquatic Species	IX-B-3: Vulnerable Aquatic Herptofauna	IX-B-3-a	Diamondback Terrapin Range & Population Condition
	IX-B-4-a			Neuse River Waterdog Range & Population Condition	
	IX-B-5: Vulnerable Estuarine Fish		IX-B-5-a	Estuarine: Atlantic Sturgeon Population Status	
			IX-B-6-a	Freshwater: Carolina Madtom Population Status	
			IX-B-7-a	Triangle Floater Occurrences	
	IX-B-7: Vulnerable Invertebrates		IX-B-7-b	Roanoke Slabshell Occurrences	
			IX-B-7-c	Tar Spiny Mussel Occurrences	
			IX-B-7-d	Dwarf Wedge Mussel Occurrences	
		IX-B-7-e	North Carolina Spiny Crayfish Occurrences		
IX-B-10-a		TBD Aquatic Insect Species Population Status/Occurrences			

# A-P Ambient Monitoring Program

- Precise goals and specific measures for monitoring policy effectiveness should be designed and tested at the time that a policy is implemented
- Status Quo: APNEP 2000 monitoring survey update

# APNEP Monitoring Proposal

- Justification for indicator
- Goal of sampling/monitoring program
  - What the optimum sampling/monitoring program will achieve and why that is important
- Existing sampling/monitoring program
  - Objectives - What the existing program is designed to measure.
    - Example: *Conduct periodic aerial mapping to monitor dramatic change of SAV presence over 5-year increments in four of six APES regions*
  - Methods
  - Costs
  - Data quality control (data quality objective)
  - Data analysis, statistical methods and hypotheses

# APNEP Monitoring Proposal

- Enhanced sampling/monitoring program
  - Objectives - what the enhanced sampling/monitoring program is designed to measure.
    - Example: *Estimate the areal distribution and abundance of SAV along the western shorelines of APES and be capable of detecting significant change in SAV distribution and abundance*
  - Methods
  - Costs
  - Data quality control (data quality objective)
  - Data analysis, statistical methods and hypotheses
- Reference(s)
- Contact Person



# Monitoring Integration Continuum

- **Independence:** Knowledge of partners monitoring strategies
- **Cooperation:** Taking advantage of common geography, timing
- **Collaboration:** Opportunities to leverage partners' monitoring networks
- **Integration:** Working toward a common set of regional ecosystem objectives

# APNEP EBM Transition Team

Policy Board  
Science & Technical  
Advisory Committee  
Citizens Advisory  
Committee  
State Planner  
Federal Planner  
EBM Tech Transfer  
Staff



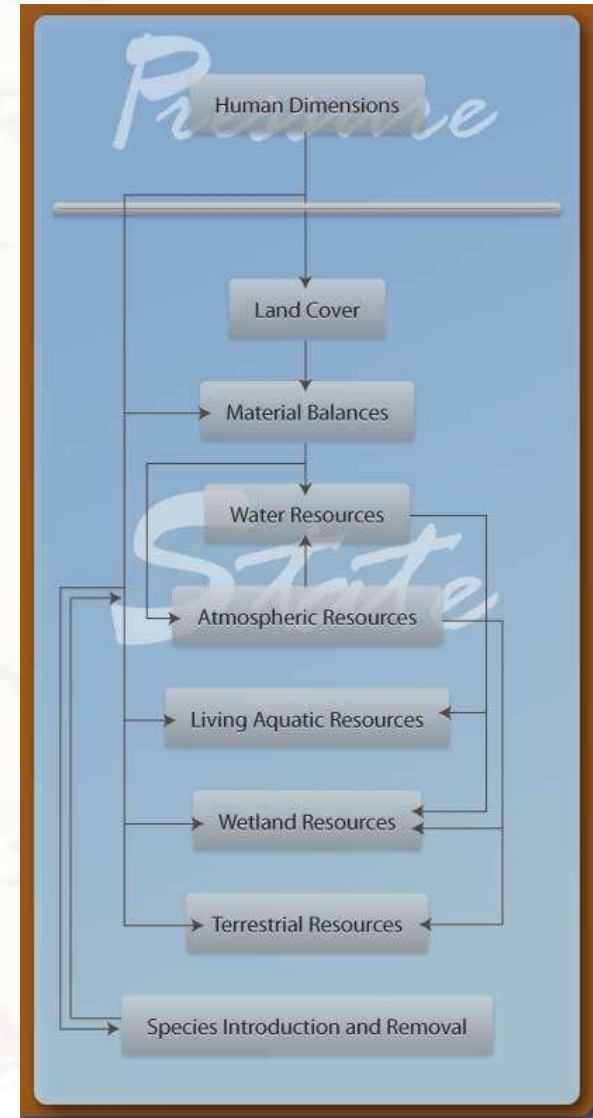
# Step 1: Articulate program goals

- Objectives Hierarchy Structure
  - Goal-Objective-Management Action-Step (1994)
  - Goal-Subgoal-Objective-Management Action (2008-2010)
  - Goal-Outcome + Component-Objective-Action (2012)
- Objectives Hierarchy Content
  - Five Goals, 15 Objectives, 49 Actions (1994)
  - Three Goals, 12 Outcomes + 5 Components, 15 Objectives, 58 Actions (2012)

# Step 2: Develop system level model for goal attainment

Ecological management actions (stressor mitigation) can impact multiple ecosystem endpoints

Multiple stressors (including other endpoints) impact directly and indirectly ecosystem endpoints

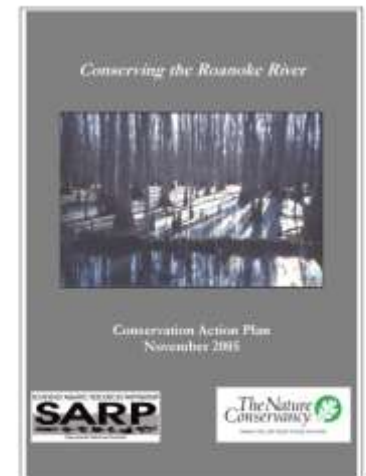
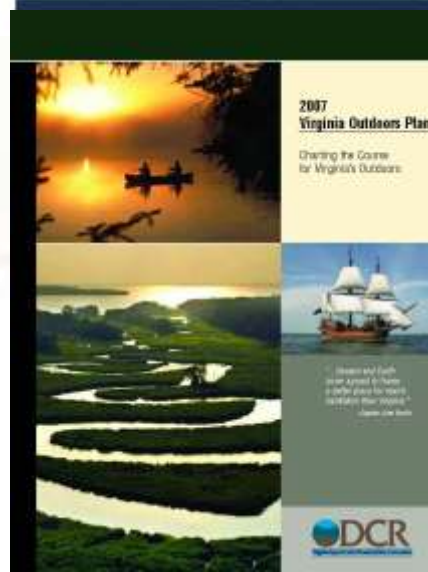
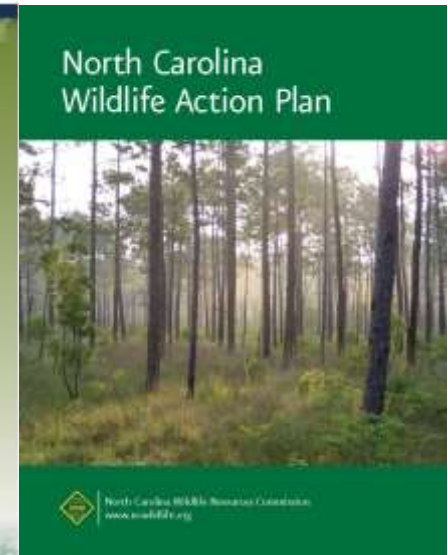
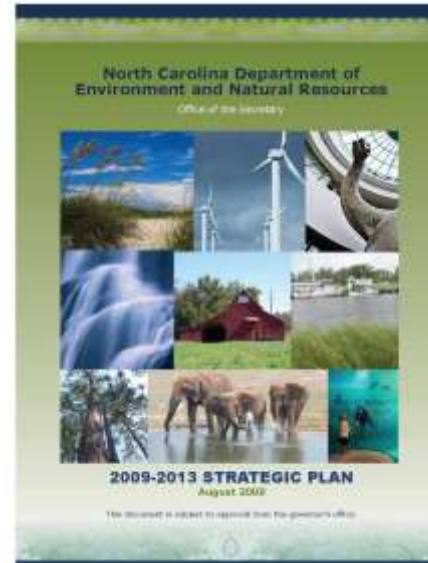






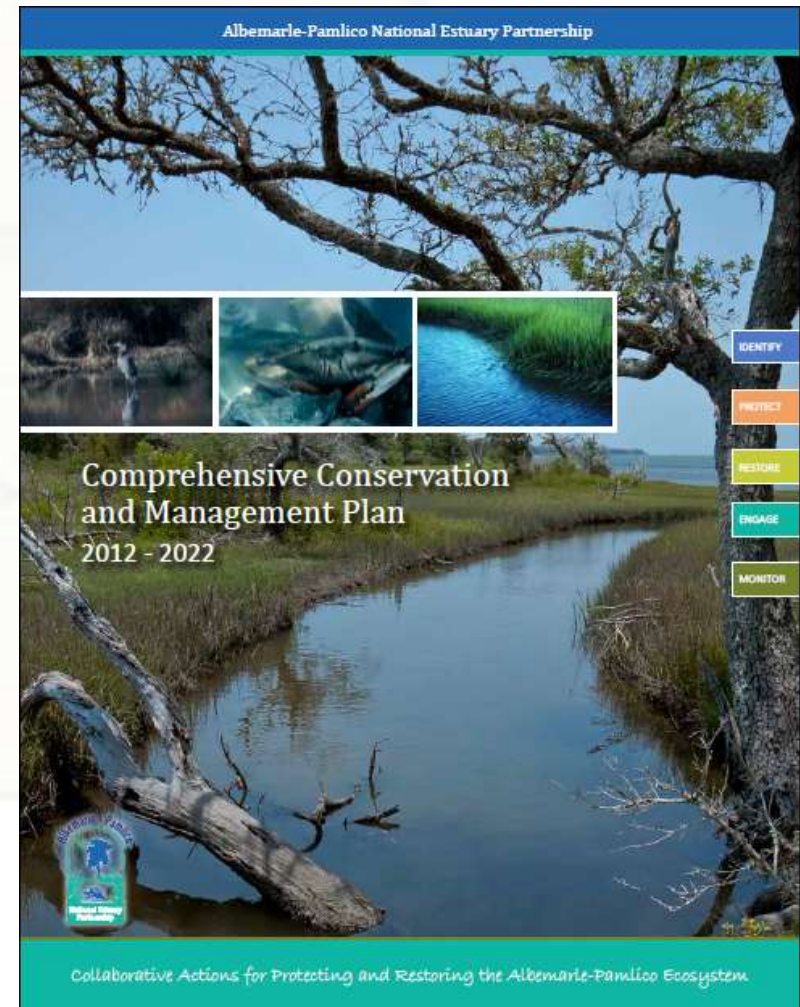
# EBM Step 3: Assess current management efforts –identify gaps

- Directed by conceptual models
- Survey of partners' strategic/action plans
  - Specificity and publication date
  - Action extraction
  - Align with APNEP outcomes/strategies
- Interview senior management



# Implement CCMP

- Fourth CCMP question
- Ten-year horizon
- **58 CCMP actions**
- Super-Aggregated into five components
- Aggregated into 15 CCMP objectives



## 2b. The extent and quality of upland, freshwater, estuarine and near-shore marine habitats fully support biodiversity and ecosystem function

Outcomes	Actions					Workgroups
1a	A1.1	B1.1	C1.1	D1.1	E1.1	Freshwater Habitats and Fish Passage
1b	A1.2	B1.2	C1.2	D1.2	E1.2	Policy & Economics
1c	A2.1	B1.3	C1.3	D1.3	E1.3	Decision Support Tools
1d	A2.2	B1.4	C1.4	D1.4	E2.1	Education & Engagement
1e	A2.3	B1.5	C1.5	D1.5	E2.2	Water Quality Improvements
2a	A2.4	B2.1	C2.1	D2.1		Shorelines
<b>2b</b>	A2.5	B2.2	C2.2	D2.2		Contaminant Management
2c	A3.1	B2.3	C2.3	D2.3		Invasives
3a	A3.2	B2.4	C3.1	D3.1		Restoration Strategies
3b	A3.3	B2.5	C3.2	D3.2		Monitoring Networks
3c		B2.6	C3.3	D3.3		Oysters
3d		B3.1	C4.1			SAV
		B3.2	C4.2			
		B3.3	C4.3			
		C4.4				
		C5.1				Flows
		C5.2				
		C5.3				

# Step 5: Develop monitoring program

- Linking candidate indicators to CCMP outcomes
- Indicator-specific monitoring strategies
  - Justification for indicator
  - Goal of sampling/monitoring program
  - Existing sampling/monitoring program
  - Enhanced sampling/monitoring program
  - Reference(s)

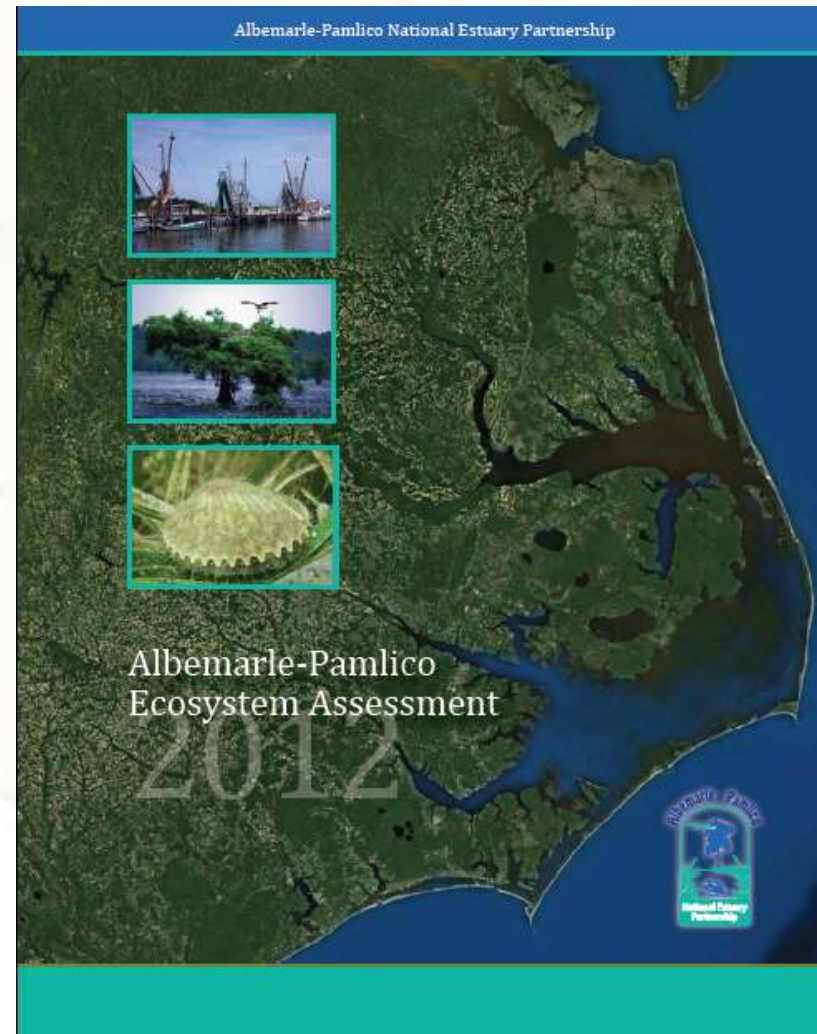
Integrated monitoring strategy





# Step 6: Assess performance

- “Interim” regional ecosystem assessment (2012)
  - Select provisional indicators
  - Status & trends from 1995 to present
  - Heinz Center format
- Phase 2 assessment
  - Diagnosis
- Phase 3 assessment
  - Forecasting





# APNEP Ecosystem Assessment

## System-Wide: Biological Components

- *Fish Populations: Sturgeon Abundance*
  - Why Is the Status of Sturgeon Important?
  - What Does This Indicator Report?
  - What Do the Data Show?
  - Why Can't This Entire Indicator Be Reported at This Time?
  - Understanding the Data
  - Technical Notes

# Assessment Planning

- “The greatest challenge in developing a large-scale biogeographic assessment is the synthesis and subsequent analysis of spatial data collected at different scales for varied objectives.”

Source: NOAA 2003, citing Gotway and Young 2002

# Bioregional Assessment Questions

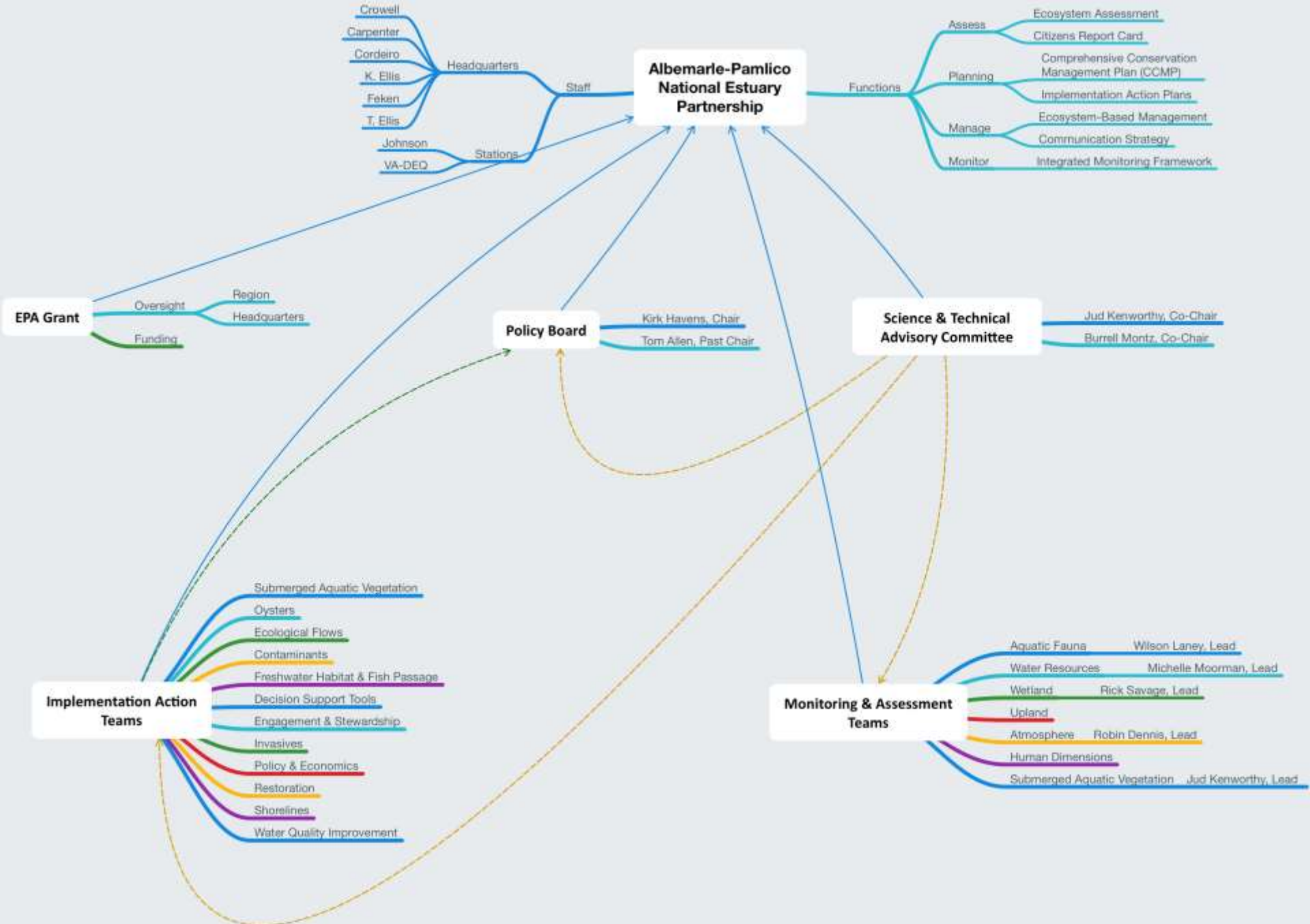
- What were historic ecological, social, and economic conditions, trends, and variability?
- What are current ecological, social, and economic conditions?
- What are trends and risks under current policies and management?
- What policy choices will achieve ecological sustainability consistent with social well-being?
- What are the implications of these choices?

Source: Erman (1999)

# Step 7: Manage adaptively

- Most difficult step?
- Senior management engagement
- Trigger levels in plan





**EPA Grant**

- Oversight
  - Region
  - Headquarters
- Funding

**Policy Board**

- Kirk Havens, Chair
- Tom Allen, Past Chair

**Science & Technical Advisory Committee**

- Jud Kenworthy, Co-Chair
- Burrell Montz, Co-Chair

**Implementation Action Teams**

- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
- Oysters
- Ecological Flows
- Contaminants
- Freshwater Habitat & Fish Passage
- Decision Support Tools
- Engagement & Stewardship
- Invasives
- Policy & Economics
- Restoration
- Shorelines
- Water Quality Improvement

**Monitoring & Assessment Teams**

- Aquatic Fauna - Wilson Laney, Lead
- Water Resources - Michelle Moorman, Lead
- Wetland - Rick Savage, Lead
- Upland
- Atmosphere - Robin Dennis, Lead
- Human Dimensions
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation - Jud Kenworthy, Lead



Category	Dimension	Indicator Type	Code	Provisional Indicator	Key Partner	Units	Event	Resolution	Event	Frequency	Event	Resolution	Event	Frequency	
Ecosystem Services	Atmospheric Services	Air Physics, Climate Change	V-B-0	Precipitation	NC State Climate Office										
			BI-D-0	Evapotranspiration by Land Cover Type	US EPA-ORNL, NCSU										
	Liquid Services	Liquid Water Generation	I-A-0	Wastewater Per Capita	DEMB, DMQ										
			I-A-0	Water Reuse	DEMB, DMQ										
			BI-D-0	Toxicant (TBE) Discharge	US-PWS-SIXANDNC										
			IV-A-0	Sea Level/Relative Sea Level	US-ACE-NC										
	Terrestrial Services	Land-Based Contaminants	BI-D-0	Water Temperature											
			IV-A-0	Toxicant (TBE) Discharge	US-PWS-SIXANDNC										
			IV-A-0	Toxicants from Land	US-PWS-SIXANDNC										
			IV-C-0	Nutrient Concentrations in Land Use Categories (Shallow Aquifer)	USGS NC										
	Land-Based Services	Land-Based Software	IV-C-0	Load in Land Use Categories (Shallow Aquifer)	USGS NC										
			IV-C-0	Toxicant Concentrations in Land Use Categories (Shallow Aquifer)	USGS NC										
			IV-C-0	Emerging Contaminants in Land Use Categories (Shallow Aquifer)	USGS NC										
			IV-A-0	Sediments from Land	NCSU										
	Elemental Cycles	Waters Physics	BI-D-0	Sedimentation in Wetlands	ECU										
			BI-D-0	Soil Loss from Agricultural Lands & Forests	NC ORE, NRECS, AG										
			BI-D-0	Evapotranspiration by Land Cover Type											
			BI-B-0	Broad Carbon in Water Columns and Sediments	US EPA, Rega										
	Management Actions	A. Waters are safe for personal contact	Swimming	IV-B-0	Human Pathogen Concentration	NC DENR, DEH									
				B. Designated surface and ground water supplies are safe for human consumption	Potable Surface Waters	IV-C-0	Drinking Water Contaminant Concentrations in Surface Waters	NCSU							
IV-C-0						Solvent Intrusion in Surface Waters	USGS NC								
C. Surface hydrologic regimes sustain regulated habitat uses				Potable Groundwaters	IV-C-0	Drinking Water Contaminant Concentrations in Water Supply Aquifers	USGS NC								
		IV-C-0	Solvent Intrusion		USGS NC										
D. Opportunities for recreation and access to public lands and waters are protected and enhanced		Recreation	BI-A-0	River, Severity, Frequency, Duration of Drags/In & Floods	USGS NC										
			IV-B-0	Flotation Defects	US NMAA, NC										
B. The extent and quality of upland, freshwater, estuarine, and near-shore marine habitats fully support biodiversity and ecosystem function		Freshwater Habitats (Streams)	IV-B-0	Upland Disturbance	US NMAA, NC										
			IV-B-0	Freshwater Habitat Balance	NC WCC, VA, DGP										
		Wetland Habitats (Streams)	IV-B-0	Hydrological Alteration in Wetlands	NC DMQ, US DOI-ACE, US DA-NRECS										
			BI-E-0	Water Quality Toxicant Concentrations (e.g., Mercury, Non-Metal Pesticides in Wetland Biotas)	NC DENR, DMQ, VA, DEQ										
A. Appropriate hydrologic regimes support ecological integrity		Hydrology	IV-A-0	Dissolved Oxygen Concentration	NC DENR, DMQ, VA, DEQ										
			IV-A-0	Bioassess of Oxygen Demand	NC DENR, DMQ, VA, DEQ										
			IV-B-0	Salinity	NCSU										
			BI-A-0	River, Severity, Frequency, Duration of Drags/In & Floods	USGS NC										
B. Nutrients and pathogens do not harm species that depend on the waters		Nutrient Management	BI-A-0	Estuarine Residence Time	USGS NC										
			BI-A-0	Shaded Ground Water Levels	USGS NC										
			IV-B-0	Chlorophyll a Concentration	NC DENR, DMQ, VA, DEQ										
			IV-A-0	Nitrogen & Phosphorus Loading	USGS NC										
C. Toxicity in waters and sediments do not harm species that depend on the waters		Toxicity	IV-B-0	Nutrient Concentrations in Nutrient Sensitive Waters	USGS NC										
	IV-D-0		Sediment Nutrient Concentration	US NMAA, NC											
	IV-B-0		Toxicant Concentration												
	IV-B-0		Mercury Concentration												
D. Sediments do not harm species that depend on the waters	Sediment Quality	IV-B-0	Perennial Care & Pharmaceutical By-Products/Nanoparticles	NC DENR, DEH, VA, DEQ											
		IV-D-0	Sediment Quality Triad	US NMAA, NC											
		IV-B-0	Suspended Sediment Concentration												
		IV-B-0	Average Sediment Depth												
Management Actions	A. Waters are safe for personal contact	Swimming	IV-B-0	Recreational & Swimming Area Closures	NC DENR, DEH										
			B. Designated surface and ground water supplies are safe for human consumption	Potable Surface Waters	IV-B-0	Beach Action Days (Cleaning Water Body Type: Beach, Freshwater River, Lake, Brackish River)	days								
					IV-B-0	WQ Standard Violations (Surface)	NCSU								
			C. Surface hydrologic regimes sustain regulated habitat uses	Potable Groundwaters	IV-B-0	Acute WQ Problem Sites (Surface)	NCSU								
	IV-C-0	Drinking Water Standard Violations (Water supply) Aquifer			USGS NC										
	D. Opportunities for recreation and access to public lands and waters are protected and enhanced	Recreation	IV-C-0	Acute WQ Problem Sites (Water supply) Aquifer	USGS NC										
			IV-B-0	Water Quality in SAV Habitats & Shellfish Waters	NC DENR, DEH										
			IV-B-0	Water Quality in Nursery Areas	NC DENR, DEH										
			IV-B-0	Amount & Extent of Impaired Waters	NCSU										
	A. Appropriate hydrologic regimes support ecological integrity	Hydrology	IV-B-0	WQ Standard Violations	NCSU										
			IV-B-0	Acute WQ Problem Sites	NCSU										
			IV-B-0	Dissolved Oxygen Standard Violations	NCSU										
			IV-B-0	Amount & Extent of Impaired Waters	NCSU										
	B. Nutrients and pathogens do not harm species that depend on the waters	Nutrient Management	IV-B-0	WQ Standard Violations	NCSU										
			IV-B-0	Acute WQ Problem Sites	NCSU										
			IV-B-0	Amount & Extent of Impaired Waters	NCSU										
			IV-B-0, IV-B-0	Toxicant Standard Violations	US-PWS-SIXANDNC										
	C. Toxicity in waters and sediments do not harm species that depend on the waters	Toxicity	IV-B-0	Mercury Standard Violations	US-PWS-SIXANDNC										
			IV-B-0	Acute WQ Problem Sites	NCSU										
			IV-B-0	Amount & Extent of Impaired Waters	NCSU										
IV-B-0			Sediment Standard Violations	NCSU											
D. Sediments do not harm species that depend on the waters	Sediment Quality	IV-B-0	Amount & Extent of Impaired Waters	NCSU											
		IV-B-0, IV-B-0	Sediment Standard Violations	NCSU											
		IV-B-0	Acute WQ Problem Sites	NCSU											
		IV-B-0	Amount & Extent of Impaired Waters	NCSU											

# Indicator Planning Decisions

- **What indicator(s) map to each environmental outcome?**
- **What are the fair, good, and excellent health target values for each ecosystem outcome indicator?**
- **What is the expected trajectory of an indicator value, based on how CCMP actions are implemented?**
- **What is the “trigger” value for a given interval since action steps are implemented, outside of which means the system is not behaving as forecast and change in business (e.g., research, revised action step, partner commitment) is required?**

# CCMP's Four Questions

- What is a **healthy** Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine System?
- What is the **status** of Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine System?
- What are the biggest **threats** to Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine System?
- What **actions** should be taken that will move us from where we are today to a healthier Albemarle-Pamlico Sounds by 2022?



# Aquatic Fauna

## Monitoring & Assessment Refs

- APES Proceedings of the Workshop on Fishery Diseases for the Albemarle-Pamlico Estuarine Study (1987)
- APES Technical Analysis of Status and Trends (1991)
- NCSG Historical Trends: Water Quality and Fisheries: Albemarle-Pamlico Sounds, With Emphasis on the Pamlico River Estuary (1992)
- EPA National Coastal Condition Assessment 2000 (2006)
- APNEP Albemarle-Pamlico Ecosystem Assessment (2012)
- USGS Estuarine Monitoring Programs in the Albemarle Sound Study Area, NC (2014)
- EPA National Rivers & Streams Assessment 2008-2009: Technical Report (2016)
- EPA National Coastal Condition Assessment 2010 (2016)

