

Natural Resources Task Force

Purpose

The United States enjoys a bountiful diversity of natural resources. Our nation's natural resources are the well-spring from which our economic and social vitality flows. Expanding human demands and national and international economic activities place ever-increasing pressures on our nation's natural resources.

The Natural Resources Task Force is developing an integrated vision of what constitutes sustainability for domestic natural resources, considering biodiversity, ecosystems, and watersheds with a focus on issues in the areas of wetlands, fisheries, agriculture, coastal resources, and forestry. The Task Force will recommend goals and actions that corporations, communities, individuals, and government at federal, state, and local, and tribal levels can take to move our nation toward protection, conservation, and sustainable management of our natural resources.

Method and Organization

Watersheds are the primary organizing principle in the Task Force's investigations. They provide a natural integration in assessing and analyzing the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of people's activities. The Natural Resources Task Force findings and vision will be based on a process of discovery using regional teams (Western, Midwestern, and Eastern) as vehicles for collecting information to find out what works and what does not through a series of watershed workshops held across the country. A federal team was created to assist in analysis and synthesis of the watershed workshops and current federal initiatives.

The regional teams invited 27 additional members to participate in the planning, synthesis, and formulation of recommendations from the workshops. These additional members were selected based on their diversity of regional experience and expertise in sustainable development from industry, conservation, government, and elected officials, which mirrors the diversity and balance of the Council.

Update

The Western Team has conducted a series of workshops throughout the region including Seattle, Tahoe, Santa Fe, Las Vegas, Yakima and Bellevue. The Midwestern Team focused its attention on the Mississippi River watershed, conducting workshops in La Crosse, Des Moines, Chicago, and Baton Rouge. The Eastern Team selected three watersheds to use as case studies: the Chesapeake Bay, Hudson River in New York, and St. John's River in Florida.

In addition to the watershed workshops, the Water Science and Technology Board of the National Academy of Sciences held a workshop in Washington, DC on Criteria for Evaluating Watershed Sustainability. The workshop participants included 14 scientists from all over the

https://web.archive.org/web/20100621141948/http://clinton1.nara.gov/White_House/EOP/pcsd/tf-reports/natural-resources.html

country with a diversity of expertise. The final product of this workshop includes a set of scientifically defensible questions and a framework for assessing and achieving sustainable human activities in watersheds.

Task Force Council Membership

Co-Chairs

- **Richard Barth**, Chairman, President & CEO, Ciba-Geigy Corporation
- **Theodore Strong**, Executive Director, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Members

- **Bruce Babbitt**, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
- **Dr. D. James Baker**, Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- **Carol M. Browner**, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- **A.D. Correll**, Chairman & CEO, Georgia-Pacific Corporation
- **Fred D. Krupp**, Executive Director, Environmental Defense Fund
- **Michele Perrault**, International Vice President, Sierra Club
- **John C. Sawhill**, President & CEO, The Nature Conservancy