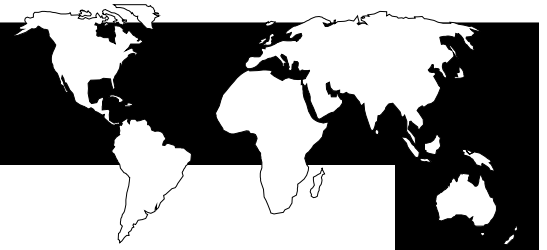


RAPID BIOASSESSMENT



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has recently codified procedures for quickly evaluating aquatic ecosystems for establishing their health, limiting factors, and other attributes. This new set of protocols is collectively termed *Rapid Bioassessment* and is a useful set of methods for assessing water quality conditions and impacts of man's activities upon rivers, lakes and streams. Aquatic organisms must integrate all of the physical, chemical, and biological factors which occur in their habitat to be able to survive. Therein lies the utility of using measurements, or "metrics" related to the existing plants and animals of an aquatic ecosystem, to gauge the health of the system. Many aquatic organisms have relatively narrow tolerance ranges for certain conditions, and can therefore serve as excellent "indicator species." Diatoms and benthic macroinvertebrates are exceptionally useful indicators which can be collected from both natural and artificial substrata. Collectively, much can be learned from evaluating the various biota of freshwater systems.

AATA International, Inc., provides all of the capabilities for rapid bioassessment of all types of aquatic ecosystems, including

- √ Periphyton/phytoplankton
- √ Benthos
- √ Fish
- √ Index of biotic integrity
- √ Community metrics

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