

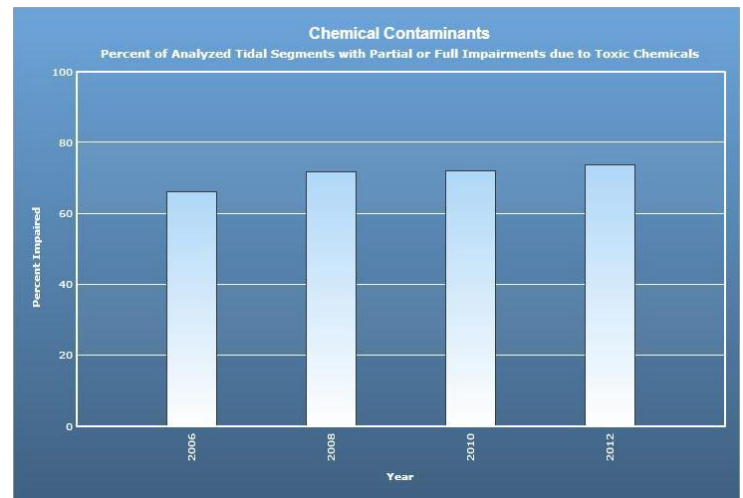
Continually increase our understanding of the impacts and mitigation options for toxic contaminants. Develop a research agenda and further characterize the occurrence, concentrations, sources and effects of mercury, PCBs and other contaminants of emerging and widespread concern. In addition, identify which best management practices might provide multiple benefits of reducing nutrient and sediment pollution as well as toxic contaminants in waterways.

Why is this outcome important?

The toxic contaminants that are widely distributed in the Chesapeake Bay watershed harm the health of fish and wildlife and present risks to human health that limit the amount of fish that people can consume. Reducing the impacts of toxic contaminants is critical to improving the health of living resources and improving their recreational value for the public. Because the public wants safe water and edible fish, outcomes related to toxic contaminants are included in the new agreement.

Current Conditions:

In 2012, close to 74 percent of the tidal water segments of the Chesapeake Bay were either fully or partially impaired due to toxic contaminants, up from 66 percent in 2006.



See how toxic contaminants are doing at chesapeakebay.net

Federal agencies released a report in 2013 that indicates that there are 10 different groups of toxic contaminants in the Bay watershed. In addition to causing fish consumption advisories in the Bay, toxic contaminants degrade the health of fish and sometimes lead to fish kills.

How was the outcome derived? Who came up with it?

The outcome is based on the findings of the January 2013 Chesapeake Bay Program report that revealed more information is needed to formulate effective reduction strategies for contaminants. The U.S. Department of the Interior worked with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, states and the District of Columbia to develop the outcome based on over 400 related public comments received on the agreement.

What was the basis or baseline?

The results from the January 2013 Chesapeake Bay Program report were used to develop the outcome. These results showed widespread extent of several contaminant groups. The results also showed that a combination of contaminant groups with widespread and local extent and/or contaminants of emerging concern (like pharmaceuticals or personal care products) have degraded the health of several species of fish and wildlife. The results are based on impairments developed by watershed jurisdictions, which rely on the monitoring of select contaminants in water, sediment and fish tissue.

For More:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/chemical_contaminants

http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/ChesBayToxics_finaldraft_11513b.pdf