

Protecting the Marine Environment with Pen and Test Tube

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ABSTRACT

Dedication of the National Marine Water Quality Laboratory last July marked the start of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's new commitment to carry out its recently won mandates in the marine environment. Procedures and requirements of the permit system implemented by PL 92-500, the "72 Water Bill," and PL 92-532, the "Ocean Dumping Bill," have given EPA's marine scientists new direction in research and added opportunities to bring their own findings and those of the scientific community at large directly into the specific constraints of individual discharge permits.

The degree to which this is another example of the blind leading the blind is discussed in terms of readiness of the marine scientific brotherhood to enter the process of public decision making. Compatibilities and contrasts of legal, regulatory, and scientific methods as they apply to marine environmental protection are described, as is the intramural EPA marine research program.