

Monitoring Bathing Waters - A Practical Guide to the Design and Implementation of Assessments and Monitoring Programmes

Edited by Jamie Bartram and Gareth Rees

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Foreword

Coastal waters, rivers and lakes are used for a variety of recreational activities, including swimming, diving, fishing and sailing. If these activities are to be enjoyed safely, attention must be given to health hazards, as well as to the prevention of accidents.

Between 1993 and 1998, *Guidelines for Safe Recreational Water Environments* were developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) Headquarters in collaboration with the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health, Rome, Italy. These guidelines were released in the form of a draft for consultation in two volumes, *Coastal and Freshwaters* and *Swimming Pools, Spas and Similar Recreational Water Environments*. They comprise an assessment of the health risks associated with recreational use of water and outline linkages to monitoring and assessment and management practices. They are intended to provide guidance in identifying, characterising and minimising the risks to human health associated with recreational use of water and to promote the adoption of a risk-benefit approach to the management of such risks. The development of such an approach involves issues such as environmental pollution, conservation, and local and national economic development and may lead to the adoption of standards that can be implemented and enforced. To implement such an approach successfully requires considerable intersectoral co-operation and co-ordination at national and local levels as well as a coherent policy and legislative framework.

This book is a practical guide to the monitoring and assessment of freshwater and marine water used for recreation and builds upon the health risk assessment described in *Guidelines for Safe Recreational Water Environments*. It provides comprehensive guidance for the design, planning and implementation of assessments and monitoring programmes for water used for recreation. It addresses the wide range of hazards that may be encountered and emphasises the importance of linking monitoring programmes to effective and feasible management actions to protect human health. It also defines elements of good practice that together constitute the Code of Good Practice for the Monitoring and Assessment of Recreational Waters.

This book will be an invaluable source of information for anyone concerned with monitoring and assessing water used for recreation, including field staff. It will also be useful for national and regional government departments concerned with tourism and recreation, undergraduate and postgraduate students and special interest groups.

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