



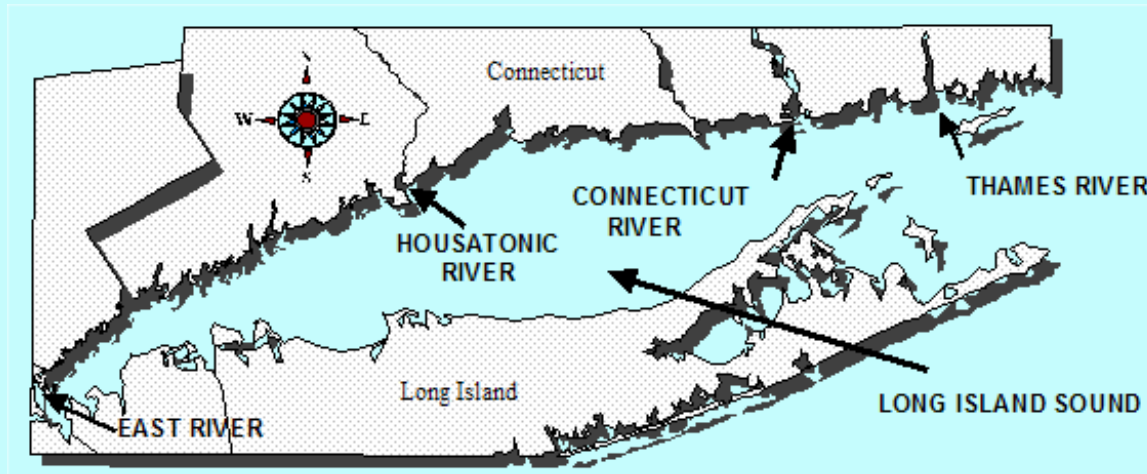
# Environmental Indicators 2008



A Report on  
Status and  
Trends in the  
Health of Long  
Island Sound

# What is Long Island Sound?

Long Island Sound is an estuary, a place where fresh water from rivers mixes with salt water from the ocean. Four major rivers and many smaller streams in CT & NY drain into the LIS basin. Like all estuaries, Long Island Sound provides feeding, breeding, nesting, and nursery areas for a diverse array of plant and animal life.



Nearly 9 million people live in the Long Island Sound watershed and millions flock yearly to the Sound for recreation. Long Island Sound supports many recreational and commercial uses. Billions of dollars are generated annually in the regional economy from boating, commercial and sport fishing, swimming, and beach going.

# Long Island Sound: An Estuary of National Significance

**1985**—The federal government and the states of Connecticut and New York initiated the Long Island Sound Study, a cooperative endeavor to analyze and correct the Sound's most pressing environmental problems.



**1987**—Congress created the National Estuary Program (NEP). Under this program, the Long Island Sound was designated an "Estuary of National Significance." The NEP has now expanded to include 28 estuaries throughout the United States, including the Sound.



**1990**—Congress passed the LIS Improvement Act under Section 119 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) created the EPA LIS Office.



**1994**—The LISS Management Conference issued and began implementation of a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan to protect and preserve the Sound.



**2000**—Congress passed the LIS Restoration Act, amending and reauthorizing Section 119 of the CWA. The Act was reauthorized in 2005.

# What is the Long Island Sound Watershed?

The Sound's watershed, which is all the land from which water drains into the Sound, extends from Long Island and Westchester County NY all the way into Canada. It covers an area of about 17,000 square miles. About 11,000 square miles (70 percent) of the watershed is in the drainage basin of the Connecticut River.

The Long Island Sound watershed is inhabited by nearly 9 million people. Any pollutants entering the water as a result of human activities in the watershed can ultimately enter Long Island Sound.



Map by Lucy Reading Design, source: USGS

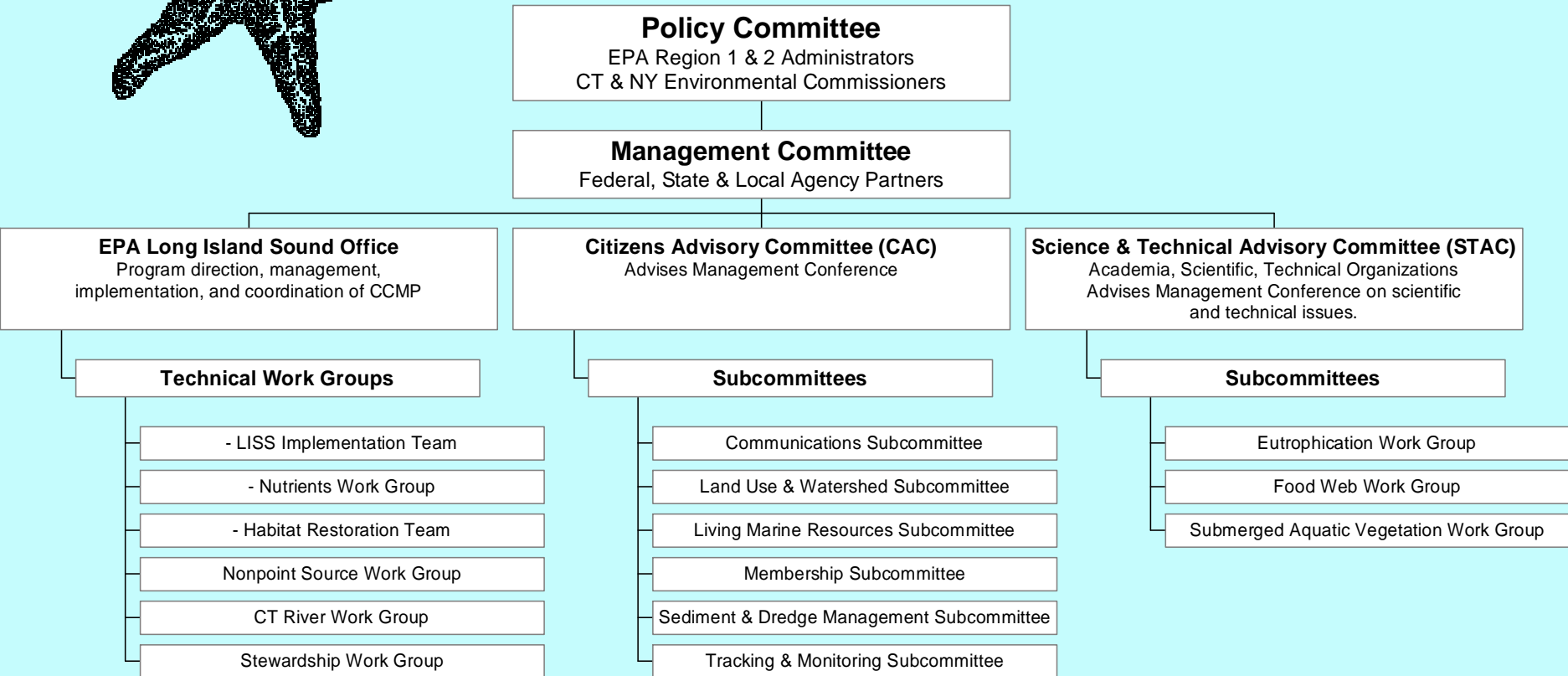
# What is the Long Island Sound Study?

The Long Island Sound Study (LISS) is a cooperative effort involving a variety of stakeholders representing citizen and environmental groups, business and industry, academic institutions, and local, state, and federal governments.



These stakeholders, collectively known as the LISS Management Conference, are working together to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

# LISS Management Conference



# Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan—1994

## **CCMP Actions seek to:**

- Improve water quality by reducing hypoxia, toxic contaminants, pathogens, and floatable debris;
- Protect plants and animals;
- Restore and protect habitats;
- Improve land use decision making that impacts; water quality and habitat protections; and
- Increase public involvement.

# CCMP Implementation

In September 1996, the Governors of New York and Connecticut and the EPA signed a Long Island Sound Agreement, reaffirming their commitment to the restoration effort.



Policy Committee signs 2003 Agreement

In December 2002, the environmental Commissioners of the two states and the EPA Regional Administrators signed the Long Island Sound 2003 Agreement, again recommitting the states and EPA to achieving the CCMP goals and establishing new targets in fulfilling the CCMP for LIS.

**The Long Island Sound 2003 Agreement** lists action priorities including elimination of hypoxia, toxic substances and pathogens in Sound waters, and restoration of the LIS ecosystem. Both states will continue their commitment to the protection of open space in the LIS watershed, and to continued public access to Long Island Sound for aesthetic and recreational purposes. The 2003 Agreement also includes initiatives targeting watershed management and public education as a means of ensuring community involvement in this important effort.



# CCMP Implementation Priorities

- Nitrogen reduction: 58.5% by 2014
- Habitat restoration: 2000 acres restored by 2020 and 143 river miles opened for fish passage by 2011
- Stewardship Initiative
- Watershed protection
  - Land use planning
  - Reduce polluted runoff
- Monitoring and research
- Public involvement and education

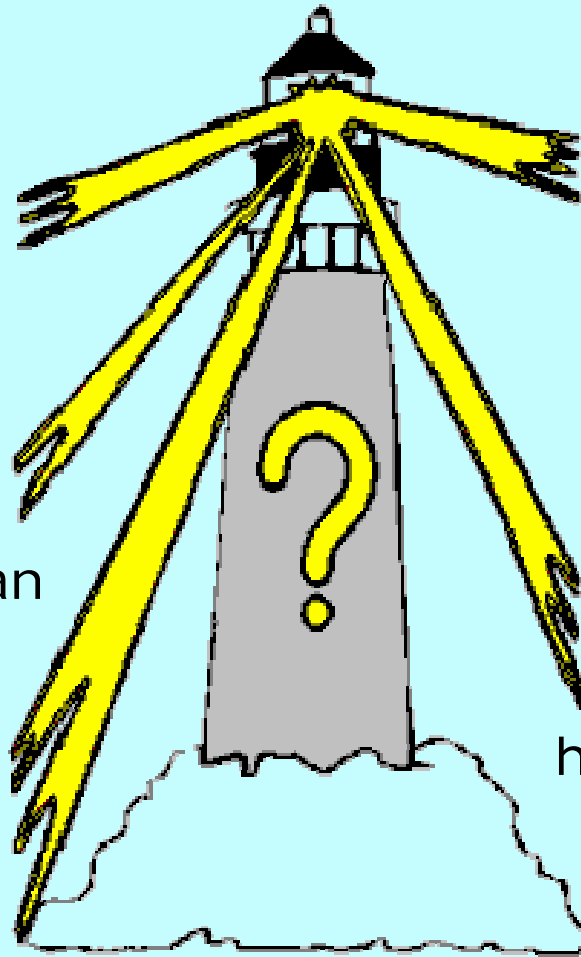
# Long Island Sound Environmental Indicators

## Address These Questions:

Are the waters and sediments getting cleaner?

How is the landscape changing due to human activities?

How is the public involved in cleanup efforts?



Are fish and wildlife populations more abundant?

Are fish and wildlife habitats being protected and restored?