



**SAB EPEC Review of the
Ecological Assessment Action Plan
February 22, 2012**

***Use of Adaptive Management
to Test and Revise
Management Actions***

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What is Adaptive Management?

- Developed for natural resource management
 - Buzz Holling and Carl Walters
 1. Take action in absence of full knowledge
 2. Identify and correct mistakes
 3. Iteratively improve assessments
 4. Gradually improve management
- Suitability to other contexts less clear
 - Remediating a Superfund site is different from setting harvest levels for a fishery year after year
- Requires that action be taken that has observable results
- Requires some analogy among decisions



Does EPA use Adaptive Management?

- No adaptive management policy or practice
- Opportunities to adopt
 - Reviews of registered pesticides
 - 5-year reviews of Superfund sites
 - Revisions of air quality criteria
- Would require more and more focused monitoring
 - Not just did management succeed but how well did the assessment assumptions, models and inferences perform?



Impetus for Adaptive Management

- Recommended by SAB
- Some colloquium participants positive
- But,
 - No legal/regulatory mandate
 - No demand from management
 - Would be highly resource intensive



Charge Question

- Please comment on how adaptive management approaches can be developed to provide optimal value for EPA programs.