

## **Guidelines for Quick Assessment of Environmental Characteristics of Rivers**

After developing the guidelines for quick assessment of Iranian wetlands, this set of guidelines were developed as a preliminary (draft) guideline and protocol for quick assessment of the ecological status of the rivers. The main objective of this document is to explicate scientific criteria for physical and biological assessment of the river, which provides a number of methods for the quick assessment as well as monitoring techniques. Therefore, it can be useful and applicable as a set of guidelines for this purpose. It is expected that this draft document can be evaluated, commented on, revised, and completed by experts and field practitioners in order to develop a more comprehensive set of guidelines and/or a standard directive for quick ecological assessment of rivers.

Along with the physical characteristics of the river, these draft guidelines provide methods for investigating the set of key aquatic species (i.e., periphytons, benthos macroinvertebrate community, and the fish), as well as for the assessment of river-based habitats.

The quick assessment protocol is a tool for cost-effective and quick search and screening as a means to determine whether a river or a part of a river is a suitable habitat, and if so, what living creatures are living there and under what conditions.

Naturally, the objective of this identification is to understand the ecological sensitivity and importance of the river as well as the management of its resources in order to maintain the life and survival of the creatures living there. Moreover, it is expected that this set of guidelines can be helpful in:

1. Detecting the presence and extent of damages to the water resources;
2. Helping with the detection of the resources and the causes of damages;

3. Evaluating the effects of conservation, improvement, and reconstruction measures;
4. Evaluating and assessing the cumulative effects of the measures and the phenomena; and
5. Detecting and defining the biological descriptions of the reference conditions.