

EPA seeks input for developing cumulative risk assessment guidelines

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The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is seeking input for guidelines it is developing for the assessment of cumulative risk, as defined in its 2003 publication, *Framework for Cumulative Risk Assessment*.

The agency is requesting information and citations on approaches and methods for the planning, analysis, assessment and characterisation of cumulative risks to human populations and the environment. The guidelines will assist agency programmes and regions in the assessment of risk and in decision making, including the planning and development of regulations and permits,” the EPA says.

The EPA's experience so far has been principally in the application of CRA “screening and chemical additivity methods for aggregating risk from multiple exposures and/or toxicity pathways, the agency says. This limited application of CRA has substantiated the value of multi-chemical/stressor assessments in an environmental risk assessment context, but illustrates a more limited application than that recommended by the National Research Council, or discussed in the 2003 CRA Framework, it adds.

The EPA is requesting information on and citations for CRA methods that have been employed to date and approaches that could help the development of better techniques. “Methods and information published in the peer-reviewed literature are preferred, and would be more readily useful,” it says. Information and citations are also being requested for existing, on-going cumulative risk assessments that incorporate the assessment of multiple chemical or non-chemical stressors, and that address any of the characteristics such as “multi-stressor, multi-media, multi-receptor, including assessment of a vulnerable population, both human and environmental health considerations, or socio-economic stressors”.

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