U.s. Geological Survey Encyclopedia Article

U.s. Geological Survey

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U.s. Geological Survey

Established as part of the Department of the Interior in 1879 and funded by Congress, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) provides support to federal agencies (e.g., the Environmental Protection Agency or EPA, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration or NOAA, and the U.S. Coast Guard) in the form of useful information for decision-making purposes concerning the management of U.S. environmental and natural resources. As part of this support, the USGS examines the relationship between humans and the environment by conducting data collection, long-term research assessments, and ecosystem analyses, and providing forecast changes and their implications. One example of this support is the provision of information about earthquake and seismic activities that is used to assess the potential impact of such activities on water quality. In addition to its federal agency support, the USGS also manages some of the following programs that address the problems of environmental pollution: (1) coastal and marine geology program; (2) contaminants program; (3) energy program; (4) fisheries and aquatic resources; and (5) global change/wetland ecology program. These external support activities and internal programs have been similarly adopted by countries such as Australia, Britain, Finland, and Japan, although not to the same degree as provided by the USGS.

Bibliography

Natural Research Council, Committee on Geosciences, Environment and Resources. (2001). *Future Roles and Opportunities for the U.S. Geological Survey.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Internet Resource

Coastal and Marine Geology Program Site. Available from http://marine.usgs.gov.