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State of Maine's Environment 2008

The State of Maine: An Environmental Assessment is a series of reports written by senior environmental policy majors at Colby College, Maine. This is the fourth in a series of reports created by students enrolled in ES 493: Environmental Policy Practicum.

The 2008 report focuses on four topics: Energy and Climate, Private Land Conservation, Toxic Substances, and Marine Fisheries. For each issue, we explore the history of the topic, laws and regulations, stakeholders, and the current state of the topic. We examine trends in relevant indicators to assess the impact of each issue on Mainers. In each section of the report, we conclude with our major findings and recommendations for future policies.

We summarize our results in our Executive Summary. You can read the chapters of our report by linking to them on this website. Click [here for the PDF version](#) of our report. We welcome your feedback and comments on these projects, and ideas for future reports.

Energy and Climate

Maine households use energy through heating, lighting, and other means specific to the Maine context. Residential energy use in Maine involves substantial fossil fuel combustion, which contributes to climate change. To read more about Energy and Climate, click here.

Toxic Substances

Mercury, arsenic and lead vary in their origins but all contribute to human health problems in Maine. We examine geographic and temporal trends in the sources of these toxics and links between toxic exposure and health problems such as cancer and birth defects. To read more about Toxic Substances, click here.

Marine Fisheries

We examine fish population trends, fisheries policy, fishing communities, and current threats to fisheries. Maine's fishing communities and activities, as well as the proximity of pollution to fish spawning grounds, all influence the current state of Maine's fisheries. To read more about Marine Fisheries, click here.

Private Land Conservation

Mainers have varied access to privately conserved lands and to information about these lands. We examine differences in public access to state and local land trusts. Land type, income, and population density also may influence access to and location of land trusts. To read more about Private Land Conservation, click here.