

An Introduction to the Breakout Session Summaries

An essential part of the Symposium was a series of discussions by participants on three issues likely to dominate the science and policy landscape in the coming years: Water and Health in Developing Countries and Disadvantaged Communities; Emerging Chemical and Microbial Contaminants in Drinking Water; and Water Supply Management and Watershed Protection. The purpose of the discussions was to peek a bit into the future and determine where the research community, policy makers and water professions will need to be in 10 or 15 years to deal with the most pressing concerns in providing safe and plentiful water to a growing and increasingly industrialized world population. Armed with these insights, the academic community (led we hope by UNC-Chapel Hill!) could reposition itself to be of greater service.

To guide the discussion, we asked section leaders to consider a variety of questions:

- What are the most pressing emerging issues to be studied in science and/or engineering?
- What policy questions arise around these issues?
- What information is available to address these questions, and where are there gaps?
- Are the institutions in place to resolve the problems and if not, what institutions and mechanisms need to be created?
- If you had a million dollars to spend on research, where would you direct it (and why)?
- Where do the pools of talent to address these issues reside, and how do we tap into them as a society?

The following three summaries provide insights into the answers generated by the three groups. If you have more to add, please contact the symposium organizers. Your ideas could form the basis of the next symposium, or become the foundations of a new area of research and outreach.